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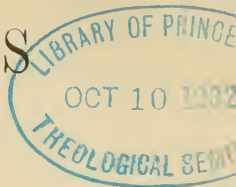








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BEACON-LIGHTS



OF

THE REFORMATION;

OR,

ROMANISM AND THE REFORMERS.

BY THE

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REV. ROBERT F. SAMPLE, D.D

WITH INTRODUCTION

BY THE

REV. JOHN HALL, D.D., LL.D.

—  
*SECOND EDITION.*  
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# INTRODUCTION.

BY JOHN HALL, D. D., LL.D.

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THE best force in this world is the truth of God's inspired word. If we are to be made wise and happy, if vice is to be put down and purity of mind and of life to be set up, divine truth is the instrument to be employed. It is the healing medicine for diseased humanity.

The students of pharmacy attach much importance to the purity of the drugs given to the sick ; and with good reason, for it is easy to see how another element, unnoticed by the ordinary patient, may destroy the healing properties of the remedy prescribed. And so the mixture of error unnoticed by the average man, or possibly deemed harmless if not even agreeable, may mar the efficacy of the revealed truth, and so far hinder the work the truth was meant to accomplish.

The Christian religion was professed, honored by the arts in music, painting, sculpture and architecture, throughout Europe in the fifteenth century. It was

incorporated with the life of the people, domestic, social, national. It was enforced by the most stringent laws. To say that the Church was joined to the State and the State reverent to the Church is hardly to put the thing fully. The Church, with the Christian religion, with offices, officers, institutions, and pains and penalties enforced in this world and threatened as to the next, ruled the European nations.

But a number of men became dissatisfied with the condition of things. They were of different times, lands and languages, but they had one burning wish. They prayed, labored and in some instances suffered for what we have, for three centuries, called "the Reformation." It came about at length over a part of Europe, and we have come to describe them—and even to bless God for them—as Reformers.

Were the Reformers in the wrong? Did they make a grave mistake? Should they have left things as they were? Have the more enlightened portions of the race, the people, that, somehow or other, have been making progress—setting up, for example, new free Protestant nations in these passing centuries—been on wrong lines? Was the condition of things against which they proclaimed war, including the pope; the priests, the traditions, the mass, the confessional, the penances, the prayers to angels and others of God's creatures,—was this a condition which they should have accepted? In

other words, was their work for God's glory and for man's good, or was it a gigantic mistake?

Outside the Church of Rome there are not many who deplore the Reformation. Well, what was its essence? The putting of divine truth where it was meant to act, and the parting from it as far as possible of the corrupting elements that had impaired its efficacy. Should we undo their work? Ought we to go back again to the mixtures which they cast away? These questions are practical at this moment in the United States, and hence the need and the value of such works as that to which these pages are meant to be—as far as needed—an introduction.

Seven millions of fellow-citizens are not imposing to the imagination in a nation like ours. But one element of strength in the life of the United States, as in that of Great Britain, is that if one great section of the people is in power it is constantly watched by another great section. So a "balance of power" is maintained. But even a fraction of the nation, if compact and under control, can affect this balance. The government may be in peril if this solid element is with the opposition. The opposition cannot hope for power if it cannot conciliate and hold this part of the community. So a section of people, with this accidental gain, may be courted by those who deem their party's ascendancy the hope of the nation from both sides. Politicians without intelligence

or principle will buy their support, and even men who could not be so described persuade themselves that, all things being fair in war, policy on this line is justifiable.

It is all the easier to do this in the United States because the nation set out on the line of its national life with the noble and ennobling conviction that no man should suffer in the State for his religious convictions. To glide over into the view that religious beliefs are all alike, that the one thing is to be sincere in them, is an easy process. That the Mormons or the Chinese are sincere in their religious beliefs is a fact which ingenuity can explain, locate or classify elsewhere. How the sincere beliefs may affect education and other great interests is a question the answer to which it is easy to postpone. It is pleasant to be "liberal," to discard bigotry and narrowness and old-fashioned prejudices. And so it has come about that in the common and political life of these United States the system which the Reformers warred against with a success which has blessed the nations—a system which, by its very nature, is illiberal, narrow, despotic and old-fashioned—is regarded with a sort of patronizing kindness. Men can point to individuals that are all that they could wish, though devout Roman Catholics; therefore, they argue, to condemn the system is narrow, and so-forth. Well, there were admirable men and women in "the Church" in the



Reformers' days, yet it was renounced, just as there were excellent persons in the British Isles last century, yet American Independence was fought for and secured.

Another element unfavorable to just thinking on this practical matter is that the study of history of the times before the age of Washington has interested only a portion of our people. The condition of Europe for centuries when this system, having set the truth aside or buried it under the traditions and inventions of men, made the "Dark Ages," they do not understand. Nor does a run to Europe with a glance at cathedrals and the romantic side of Old-World life disenchant such minds. They do not take in the situation nor realize the influence for evil which can be perpetuated in our free country by the well-directed force of a great corporation under the sanction of Religion's sacred name—a corporation which claims, wherever it can safely speak out, wherever its officers have no motive for flattering and misleading Protestants, that it is unchanged and unchangeable.

"But is there not much truth in the Romish system?" Undoubtedly. Now and then a skilled villain is found by the police manufacturing dollars largely of copper and tin. There is some silver over the tin, or the counterfeit coin would not pass. And so you can find in the authoritative teachings of Rome many great truths; but over them are errors congenial to fallen

human nature that warp the truth and make it ineffectual. God is worshiped and prayed to, but how many others are similarly treated! Christ's work is magnified, but how men must "go about to establish their own righteousness" to get the benefit of it! The commandments are rehearsed, but how often the image is bowed down to, notwithstanding! Is this loyalty to God? "Moses is gone," said the Hebrews, "and God we cannot see. Give us something we can see and worship." And when the golden copy of the Egyptian bull, with which they had been familiar, was made, and when Aaron made proclamation, "To-morrow is a feast to Jehovah," he did not renounce Jehovah. The calf was only an "aid to devotion" to the poor people! But the righteous God treated them as idolaters. Hear one of our best Bible scholars on it: "So Jehovah judges concerning the image-worship of the people: that they intend to worship him in their service he does not acknowledge. Hence we translate here too, 'These are thy gods;' in the pretended image of God he sees the germ of idolatry, a deviation from the way of revelation which he had commanded." (See Schaff-Lange's commentary on Ex. 32:6-8.) It is because errors and germs of errors make up what is distinctive of Romanism, and because these set aside and choke the truth, that we want our people to understand the system.

Then what should be done? Intelligent people who

love their race and their country should read and learn on this matter. Ministers in preaching the word should explain the warnings and prophetic cautions, in their places, as they do the promises. Our young people should be so instructed as to be able to discriminate between Bible truths and Bible ways, and romance, sentiment, casuistry or positive error.

“Well, but it will be offensive to fellow-citizens to set forth these things.” So it was to the Hebrews when Christ denounced Pharisaic formalism and human inventions that made void the word of God. So it was when the apostles set forth the evils and sins of idolatry. Did they hold their peace therefore? “Ah! yes; but it was one thing for Christ the Son of God to utter denunciation; it is different with you.” Yes, if we were originating the hard thoughts and strong words. But we are not. They are not ours; they are his. Are we to hold our peace about the eternal damnation that unrepented sin brings because some men will not like it? They who are making popular favor their chief end may do so, but for those who have, through a free Bible, a free Church in a free State, and are pledged to re-echo to men the message of the holy and jealous God, there is no other course than to “put the brethren in remembrance of these things.” We are to speak “in love,” but it is “the truth” we are to speak.

This is done in the following pages, and it is a pleas-

ure to commend them to readers, who the more they know the truth of God will the better appreciate the grace that enlightened them, will the more fully consecrate themselves to duty as patriots and as Christians, and, instead of being the slaves of a partisan and selfish bigotry, will be the more ready to understand, to allow for disadvantages, and to make positive patient effort for the enlightenment of Roman Catholic fellow-citizens.

NEW YORK, October, 1889.

TO THE  
WESTMINSTER CHURCH  
IN THE CITY BY THE FALLS OF ST. ANTHONY.  
MY PASTORAL CHARGE FOR NINETEEN YEARS,  
AND TO THE  
WESTMINSTER CHURCH  
IN THE CITY BY THE SEA,  
ALIKE FAITHFUL AND DEARLY BELOVED,  
THIS BOOK  
IS  
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED  
BY THE AUTHOR.

NEW YORK, N. Y.



## PREFACE.

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IN the treatment of Romanism there is a tendency to extremes. Some persons are occupied with its evil features only, others exclusively with the good. Some apply to it epithets that are unduly harsh and untrue, others indulge in flatteries that mislead and do incalculable harm. Extremes are both easy and wrong. To know Romanism as it has been, we must study its history. To know it as it is, we need only to look around. The Romanism of to-day, as it exists in Protestant countries, is modified by its environment. Whilst its principles remain unchanged, it adapts itself, in a measure and outwardly, to the prevailing sentiments and customs of the communities it hopes ultimately to control. To ascertain its real spirit and intent we must inquire in the countries it dominates, such as Spain, Portugal, Brazil and Mexico. Here you will find an exemplification of the divinely-enunciated principle, "A corrupt tree bringeth forth corrupt fruit."

It is not so much with Roman Catholics that we

shall have to do in the narratives that will follow as with the Romish system and religion. Many Romanists are kind neighbors, good citizens, devout Christians. They are worthy of our confidence and most affectionate regard. But we are profoundly convinced, after long investigation, that the papacy is anti-Christian and the Romish religion sadly corrupt. The assumption that the pope of Rome is the vicar of Christ, the visible head of the Church on earth, invested with authority to govern Christendom and rule the world, infallible in his teachings and entitled to universal reverence, is an insult to God and a malediction to all who accept it.

Romanism is not a thing of the past with which we have no immediate concern. It is a living issue, and a most serious one. Its history interprets its present life and reveals its future; it both instructs and warns. We shall be occupied for a little with the salient facts of the great Reformation, especially as associated with its representative men. As we advance, the errors of the Romish Church will pass in review before us; her degradation of all that is true and good will appear, and her temper and purpose, as opposed to the prerogatives of God and to both the temporal and spiritual interests of men, will declare themselves as changeless as her postulates are profane.

There exists a necessity for constant watchfulness



against the inroads of Romanism, and unremitting efforts in behalf of true religion. The lines of Protestantism must be pushed continually outward, all great centres of population and influence evangelized and the gospel preached to every creature. Only thus, working in dependence upon God, prompted by love to Christ and souls, shall we secure the supremacy of Bible truth and bring the nations to our Lord, the true Head of the Church, the only Mediator between God and men. Then shall the mystery of iniquity be destroyed, and the glad acclaim of heaven shall answer the hosannas of earth. May God be pleased to use, in some measure, this effort of one of his servants in hastening a consummation which piety devoutly desires,—and to him shall all the praise be ascribed !



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THE RISE OF ROMANISM.

*"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."*

2 THESS. 2 : 1-3.

*"The Supreme Judge, by whom all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture."*

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. I. SEC. X.

*"No more cunning plot was ever conceived against the freedom, happiness and virtues of mankind than Romanism."*

GLADSTONE.

## THE RISE OF ROMANISM.

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**B**EFORE considering the rise of Romanism we shall need to take a hasty review of early Christianity. The apostolic Church accomplished a work which has been the wonder of the ages. The purity of its teachings, the simplicity of its worship and the obscurity of its first adherents promised no such results as were witnessed in the first century after Christ. The new religion was opposed to the spirit of the world, and was opposed by it. Accepted philosophies pronounced it the effect of mental disorder, the spawn of moral distemper. Earthly kingdoms were arrayed against it and a demoniac rage girdled it with fire. But it went forth to its mission in dependence upon Him who is invisible, and endued with power from on high. It mattered not that no ermine clothed it, that no orators pleaded its cause, that no imperial ægis overshadowed it, that no armies intimidated its foes. It won its conquests by means of superhuman power, by its adaptation to conscious need, its interpretation of reminiscences no speculative philosophy could define, its revelation of possibilities of good that would satisfy the race.

The polity of the early Church was favorable to its spiritual growth. No hierarchy sought to dominate religious life. The parity of the ministry was main-

tained. The sacred Scriptures, released from human traditions, were accepted as the only and sufficient rule of faith and conduct. Dedication to Christ was urged by motives drawn from divine authority, from infinite love, from every interest that gathered about human life passing through nature to eternity.

It is true the Church even then was not perfect. There were stains upon the first pages of its history. The surrounding world sought to corrupt it, and succeeded in marring its beauty. Errors found entrance. Paganism pressed its way into the holy places. Gnosticism resisted the essential elements of its faith, whilst older sophistries sought to poison religious life at its sources. Yet the primitive Church was singularly pure, and its spiritual force hewed for itself a path to victory. It passed from Jerusalem into the remotest regions, extending "from Cape Comorin to Britain, and from Scythia to the pillars of Hercules—" from the far Hindostan to what was accounted the world's western extreme. The success of the gospel is admitted by heathen and Christian historians alike. Pliny and Tacitus are in accord with Tertullian and Eusebius. The sneers of Celsus carried an admission of its progress.

The persecutions of the early Church guarded its purity and extended its influence. Roman emperors endeavored to exterminate its followers, but unwittingly multiplied their numbers. If under imperial blows the Church for a little went down, yet like the fabled Antæus it quickly rose, stronger than when it fell. But it was not long until radical changes occurred. In the fourth century the Church, in the person of a Roman emperor,



ascended the throne of the Cæsars. Then it seemed to have reached the summit of power and claimed the world as its own.

The conversion of Constantine marked a new epoch in ecclesiastical history. This noted emperor had been a pagan. Apollo was his tutelar god. His offerings to imaginary deities were so munificent as to command the admiration of the heathen world and to secure him favorable mention in the history of his age. But in course of time he seems to have felt the need of a higher form of religious belief. Paganism promised neither victory in war nor blessing in peace. He was persuaded that his empire must be established on a better religion, and the more nearly that religion approximated to absolute truth the more powerful and permanent would be the throne reared upon it. Then, it may be, there came to him a consciousness of personal need which paganism could not supply. His thoughts may have traveled into the infinite Beyond, around which gathered a deepening solemnity, and he may have longed to be assured of real enduring good. Be this as it may, it is recorded that during an Italian campaign, soon after the sun had passed the meridian, there appeared in the firmament a cross, and above it the inscription, "In hoc signo vinces"—By this thou shalt conquer. On the following night it is said that Christ himself appeared unto Constantine, and directed him to make a standard in the form of the sign he had seen in the heavens. Thus originated the *Labarum* which was borne at the head of imperial armies, its presence regarded a pledge of victory. It is not our purpose to discuss the genuineness of Constantine's conversion or the motives which may have led to

his adoption of the Christian religion, but simply to indicate its relation to the subsequent history of the Church. Christianity became the established religion of the empire. The sword of persecution was sheathed. Proscription came to an end. The shame of the cross ceased. The long-venerated Jupiter vanished before the glories of Jehovah, whose dominion is universal and eternal. The house of God displaced the heathen temple. The Christian Sabbath became a civil as well as a religious institution, and its sanctity was guarded from worldly encroachments. The subjugation of every false religion and the establishment of the true seemed assured, and piety rejoiced in the promise of that crowning day. But triumph may be defeat, power may prove weakness, and glory may turn to shame. It was not long until the spirituality of the Church began to wane. The gospel was soon corrupted. Pomp and splendor and gorgeous ceremony supplanted the simple worship of earlier days. The so-called successors of the apostles grew worldly, arrogant, and lovers of themselves rather than of God. The Church of Christ was allied to an earthly kingdom, and suffered in consequence of the incongruous affiliation.

— Previous to the introduction of Christianity the priesthood of paganism dominated every form of life, from the humblest hearthstone to the throne. Of the Eastern nations history records that their respect for a priest was greater than that for the king. The priests coerced silence by their edicts, and crowned heads were as submissive as their vassals. This autocracy did not cease when the Christian religion under Constantine supplanted pagan superstition. It simply passed from the possession

of the former into the hands of the latter priesthood, and then entered upon its westward march. Gaul and Germany and contiguous countries accepted old ideas as to priestly pre-eminence. Great cathedrals were the seats of its power. Sacred places were crowned with monasteries, and the wealth of the latter exceeded the treasures of kings. Earthly potentates thought to atone for their sins by costly gifts to the monastic exchequer. They even transferred cities, castles and provinces to the high officials of the Church, and invested them with royal prerogatives. Spiritual teachers became secular rulers, and grew more corrupt as they advanced in worldly power. Out of this perversion of the original functions of the ministry grew that hierarchy which destroyed freedom of thought, enslaved nations and subjugated kings.

In the third century Cyprian had advocated episcopacy, and hinted that supreme rule was vested in the Roman bishop. The early presbyter was degraded that primacy might be enthroned. Irenæus and Tertullian insisted upon the equality of all the apostolic churches, and in every question of doctrine or polity deferred to their decisions. Meanwhile, Constantinople sought the pre-eminence.

But it was not long until Rome, the capital of the great empire of the West, its grandeur crowning the seven hills, its possibilities of advancement acknowledged and its claim to perpetual superiority not wholly unquestioned, began to demand ecclesiastical in connection with civil supremacy. The Church in the Orient, on the South and in the West consented that the bishop of Rome should be recognized as supreme, and

the Bosphorus was compelled to see its sceptre of power transferred to the Tiber.

Leo I., styled the Great, may be considered the first in the long line of popes. Under him Roman Catholicism assumed a theocratic form, and became an institution or polity which has held its place until the present. Until Leo arose in the might of his ambition, the bishop of Rome was in theory simply equal in power with other bishops, although superior deference had been accorded to him because of the unequaled splendor of the city which was the seat of his bishopric. But Leo was not satisfied with this. He claimed that the bishop of Rome was the successor of St. Peter, and that the primacy belonged to that apostle by the direct, positive designation of our Lord. On this rock the Church was to be built. Peter himself had established this supremacy at Rome. The basilica by the Tiber, displacing the temple of Jupiter Vaticanus, was the monument the Church had reared over the dust of the holy martyr to commemorate both his moral heroism and his ecclesiastical primacy. Not by way of Constantinople or Carthage or any other claimant of pre-eminence, but through Rome, came this great distinction. Here Peter, to whom had been committed the keys of heaven and hell, the representative of the absent Christ, as his vicegerent, had erected his seat of jurisdiction. Valentinian III., then occupying the imperial throne, sent forth his decree declaring that the primacy of St. Peter had ceased to be a question of dispute. His appointment to the pontificate by the Lord himself, the decision of the Council of Nice and the dignity of Rome had set the matter for ever at rest, and the supremacy of the Roman See must

be recognized by the bishops of Gaul and all others or they must incur the imperial displeasure.

Thus under Leo the Great, in the middle of the fifth century, the religion of Rome became a government, rearing its throne among the seven hills, demanding the allegiance and submission of the universal Church, constraining every Christian to bow and worship on the steps of its power.

There is not the slightest evidence that Christ designated Peter to any such lordship over his Church. It was not on this disciple, but on his confession of Christ, that the Church was to be built—on the *Petra*, not the *Petros*. Neither is there any certain proof that Peter was ever in Rome. In none of his Epistles does he intimate it. Paul dwelt in Rome and suffered martyrdom beyond one of its gates, but in his letters to the churches and to personal friends he does not make the slightest allusion to Peter, even as a visitor to the imperial city. No manuscript of the first century contains any record by which the Romish Church can substantiate the claim which is made the corner-stone of the papal system. It was not until all the apostles and the generation to which they belonged had passed away, and the second century was about to close, that the Clementine Homilies announced Peter as bishop of Rome. The groundless assumption became a tradition, and the next generation handed it down to its successor.

The claim of Leo met with opposition. The Eastern Church denied his right to the tiara. Nevertheless, he held his ground and wore the papal crown. It has well been said that “Paul saw the incipient workings of the ‘mystery of iniquity.’ The twilight then began

which advanced in slow progress to midnight darkness. Superstition, which is so congenial with the human mind, was added to superstition, and absurdity to absurdity."

"The Roman hierarchy, amidst alternate successes and defeats, struggled hard for civil and ecclesiastical sovereignty. Leo, Gregory, Innocent and Boniface in their several days advanced the papacy on the ruins of episcopacy and royalty, bishops and kings." The power of this false system attained its culmination under Leo X., when the holy pontiff compelled imperial heads to lay their crowns at his feet and provincial bishops to address him as their god. In the Council of the Lateran, Stephen, archbishop of Petraca, declared that Leo possessed "power above all powers, both in heaven and in earth," thus exalting him "above all that is called God," and going beyond Marcellus, who in the same council styled the pope "God on earth." From that blasphemous summit, flinging its affront in the face of Jehovah and claiming more than divine prerogatives, the papacy began its descent, and down the long slope, hesitating, resisting and struggling to recover its power, it is going to its burial. In our own day, immediately succeeding the enunciation of papal infallibility by the ecumenical council, the successor of St. Peter lost his temporal power, and instead of Pius IX. reigned Victor Emmanuel, a suggestion of the final and worldwide triumph of the King of kings.

As a religion, in distinction from its government, Roman Catholicism is an admixture of truth and error. It apparently rests on a scriptural foundation. The superstructure is wood, hay and stubble. Yet, bad as



it is, it is better than any form of infidelity—better than any other religion called Christian which directly denies the essential doctrines of our holy faith. The Roman Church in its creed maintains the personality and sovereignty of God, the personal Godhead of Jesus Christ, salvation through the blood of the cross, the necessity of holy living and a future state of retribution. At the same time, these cardinal principles are obscured or modified by grave errors. The truth is in the Confession, but is hidden under the rubbish of human traditions, the decrees of councils and the supplementary teaching of popes whose prerogative it is to transmute sin into duty and falsehood into truth. Hence by far the larger part of the Romish communion, occupied with the errors of the papacy, never discover saving truth.

Romanists *deny the completeness of the Sacred Scriptures*. They teach that doctrines essential to salvation are only obscurely presented in the word of God. Hence the divine revelation finds its complement and interpretation in tradition. The obscurity which envelops the Bible impairs its value and may mislead souls. The Church is a safer guide to faith—not that it sets aside the Scriptures, but because it discovers their meaning. All this is dishonoring to the word of God, the entrance of which gives light and life.

The Bible is withheld from the laity. Exceptions are made, but they are reluctantly granted and are few. Gregory VII., Innocent III., Clement XI. and Pius IV. “made the liberty to read any version of the Scriptures dependent on the permission of the priest.” In accordance with the action of the Council of Trent,

any one who reads the Holy Scriptures without the consent of his spiritual adviser "may not receive absolution of his sins except he first deliver up his Bible to the ordinary." Pius IX. pronounced the American and Foreign Bible societies "moral pests." It seems to be assumed that the most of Roman Catholics are unlearned and unstable, and would wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction. It is the province of the priest to read, or to permit to be read, portions of the word of God, and his interpretation of the fragmentary Scriptures must be accepted by the loyal papist.

The so-called *infallibility* of the Church of Rome is against freedom of inquiry and belief of essential truth. If the Church is infallible, then it is unchangeable; and if unchangeable—and this by a logical sequence—then all the decrees of the popes and councils, however erroneous, must stand through all ages, and from their supremacy there is no escape. This principle also discourages inquiry by the history of its application. The infallible Church burnt heretics, hung them on gibbets, broke them on racks, drowned them in the sea. In doing this it claims to have done the will of God, and what has been done may be done again. The principles and spirit of Romanism, according to the teachings of the Church, cannot change. This being so, restraint upon the papacy is sin, and it only waits an increase of power that it may repeat St. Bartholomew's Day and the Inquisition.

We think better things of Roman Catholicism than it can logically claim for itself. Nevertheless, the shadow of the past, creeping on with the passing years,



darkens the spiritual understanding by preventing access to the sources of truth. 7

*The office of faith is perverted* in the Romish Church. All that is requisite to salvation is "a general intention to believe whatever the Church believes." This intention may exist in connection with profound ignorance and absolute disbelief. The Church exalts itself above Christ, makes non-essential that which is necessary to salvation, and essential that submission to the Church which God has not required. If it is not necessary to know the truth, then the Bible may be withheld from the people, the worship of the Church may be conducted in an unknown tongue and the pulpit may refrain from a clear enunciation of truth. All that is required is blind assent to the guidance of the Church as a divine institution for saving men, and submission to its authority. Out of all this has grown the so-called aphorism of Romanism: "Ignorance is the mother of devotion," evidently accepted by so great a teacher as Cardinal Newman, who said, "Religious light is intellectual darkness." This directly contravenes the divine declaration that we are "chosen unto salvation through belief of the truth," and dishonors the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to guide into all truth.

There is a strange mingling of the false and the true in the Romish religion. Persons received to membership are expected to recite, whether they understand and *ex animo* accept it or not, the Nicene Creed. This contains the fundamental truths of Christianity. But this formula is followed by another confession which incorporates the gravest errors and virtually denies the first. A saving truth is announced, and then it is dis-

placed by false doctrine, or in the minds of many is obscured by erroneous beliefs and practices that are associated with it. They are happy who stop with the Nicene Creed; they are to be commiserated who follow false lights into moral jungles and spiritual night. There have always been devout Christians in the Romish Church. Some have towered in piety and have well deserved the appellation of saints. Many priests have trusted in Christ, loved him, and now share his glory. Wyclif and Savonarola were Reformers, but they continued in the Church of Rome. Martin Luther was a Christian before he climbed Pilate's Staircase and renounced the papacy. Pascal, Anselm, Fénelon, Madame Guion, Faber, were believers eminent in holiness. There are such Christians in the Romish Church in our day, and such priests as Lacordaire and Père Hyacinthe, who have planted their feet on the Rock of Ages and trust only in the ascended Lamb. But this fact does not prove the Romish system divine or its teachings in their entirety true. Men and women have been Christians in spite of Romanism, not because of it. They are like some plants which thrive in the shade, where the most of plants would droop and die.

Among the grave errors of the Romish Church may be mentioned the doctrine of the *mass*. Concerning it the Council of Trent declared that it is "a true and proper sacrifice of Jesus Christ, offered up to the Father by the hands of the priest; that it is a propitiation for sin, not only of the living, but of the dead; that it is rightfully performed when the words of consecration are uttered in an unknown tongue and in a low voice." This doctrine degrades the death of Christ, who "hath

by one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified." It takes salvation out of Christ's hands and commits it to the priest. It makes the repetition of the sacrifice of the cross necessary to the remission of sins; and this involves the doctrine of transubstantiation, in which a priest clad in vestments, speaking "in an unknown tongue and in a low voice," by a single wave of his hand transmutes bread into the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ, and summons the adorable Mediator from his throne to repeat his sacrifice for sin. The table which Christ spread the same night in which he was betrayed, designed to be a memorial of the death about to be accomplished, the only and sufficient sacrifice for all the ages, is supplanted by the offering of Romanism, and another priesthood succeeds the Levitical, presenting not a symbolic sacrifice, but a real one, and that of the enthroned and glorified Christ. We cannot conceive of a more obvious falsehood, a grosser superstition or a greater crime.

The *Mariolatry* of Romanism is a deflection from saving truth, and is unquestionable idolatry. The Virgin Mary receives more honor than her Son. More souls cling to her skirts than hide in the cross. Even in our own century Pope Gregory XVI., addressing the faithful, said, "Let us raise our eyes to the most Blessed Virgin Mary, who alone destroys heresy, who is our greatest hope—yea, the entire ground of our hope." A Roman Catholic manual now extant contains the following invocation: "O Holy Virgin, mother of God; my advocate and patroness! Pray for thy poor servant, and show thyself a mother to me." Observe the following stanza in the *Stabat Mater*:

“O Christ! when thou shalt call me hence  
Grant me, through thy mother,  
The palm of victory.”

Again: “O most Blessed Virgin, vouchsafe to negotiate, for and with us, the work of our salvation by thy powerful intercession.” Where now is our ever-to-be-adored Lord, whom the Scriptures declare to be our Advocate with the Father, and able to save unto the uttermost, since he ever liveth to make intercession for us? By what authority, save that of the Romish Church, is Mary declared to be “queen of heaven,” “bright queen of heaven,” “holy mother” and “sovereign queen,” “mother of grace and clemency”? Has Christ left his throne? Has Mary supplanted her own Lord and only Saviour? Shall this most honored of women so fill the horizon of our most devout hours that her Son shall be practically hidden or remain a helpless babe in the arms of the holy mother?

Now, far be it from us to say that all Romanists are guilty of this idolatry, or that the Virgin in every instance shuts out of view her greater Son. But, in profound sadness be it said, this Mariolatry sweeps a broad circle and at its altar many perish. The human heart, we know, craves a mother, and when storms are abroad would hide in her bosom. But it hath pleased the Father that in Christ, our only Mediator, should all fullness dwell. His sympathy exceeds that of a mother, as heaven is higher than the earth and infinity outruns the finite. There is no comforter like him. None has an arm so strong to support. He is the Consolation of Israel, in the folds of whose priestly robes his own mother according to the flesh humbly hides and there remains.

Associated with Mariolatry is the *worship of saints* and the veneration paid to their images. This is a rebaptized heathenism. The ancient Greeks worshiped heroes, and by an accepted apotheosis converted them into gods. Hercules was a deified man, so was Æsculapius, so were others. There were gods many. They filled the aisles of Minerva's temple and the niches of the Pantheon, and attracted the devout to humbler shrines. Rome has its army of saints, and these, according to the creed of Pius IV., are to be worshiped and prayed to; they are believed to offer prayers unto God in behalf of the faithful; their relics are to be had in veneration, and to their images due honor and worship should be paid. This is idolatry. It practically exalts saints to a level with Christ, the only Mediator. It dishonors our Lord, diverts attention from him and separates the soul from the sources of spiritual succor.

As respects the use of images, it may be urged that they are aids to devotion and a stimulus to holy living. They transfer the thoughts of the worshiper to the life beyond, and suggest the possibility of attaining to higher stages of piety, even to like distinction with canonized saints, on condition of faithful service to the Church. This is a theoretic interpretation of the office of images which does not, as a rule, affect the practical result. History and personal consciousness declare the tendency of our nature to idolatry and to the substitution of the images themselves for the spiritual truths they are supposed to suggest.

The doctrine of *purgatory* is devoutly held by the Romish Church. The souls confined in it, purified by suffering, may receive aid from surviving friends, and

the coffers of the Church are replenished by offerings which secure the repetition of the mass in behalf of the dead. This doctrine debases the work of Christ, since it declares the insufficiency of his atonement by the supplement of purgatorial pains. The doctrine of purgatory, with the support it gives to other errors, is as mercenary as it is unscriptural. It appeals to the profoundest sympathy and most cherished affections of our nature. Even poverty will suffer great privations that it may serve the departed, whilst wealth enriches the Church by its purchase of prayers for the dead. Many of the faithful in their wills designate large sums to this end in their own behalf. Philip V. of Spain thus ordered one thousand masses to be said for the repose of his soul, and, thinking that this might exceed the necessities in his case, generously provided that the excess, if any, "should be credited and made revertible to poor solitary souls concerning whom no person bestowed a thought."

This doctrine is a cruel one. The prospect of purgatorial pains darkens the life of such as implicitly believe it. It increases the natural fear of death, and launches the soul with unspeakable dread into the inflictions of an intermediate state. It aggravates the sadness of bereavement, since it denies the departed soul an immediate entrance into heaven, and commits it to sufferings of an indefinite nature and duration. None are exempt from those venial sins which subject to this necessity. Even the pope must take purgatory on his way to heaven, and masses are said for the early release of his soul. In what marked contrast does this stand with the belief of Protestant Christians, that the souls of believers are at



their death made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into glory—one moment the final farewell to earth, the next the deep swell of the angelic anthem!

Thus error hides the truth. The Standards of the Romish Church and the decrees of her councils uphold the essential truths of the gospel, and then by human additions practically destroy them. Many receive the truth, and through it are saved. But we fear a far greater number are occupied with the gross errors which hide the truth or nullify it, and go to their account with a lie in their right hand.

Not wishing to extend this review of Romanism, it may suffice to say that it insists upon withholding many inherent rights and privileges the exercise and possession of which are needful to the highest interests of the individual and the State. For example, the right of *private judgment* is denied. Men may not think, judge and decide for themselves. The faculties God gave them may not be used for the purpose evidently intended. The Romanist must bow to the supreme authority of the Holy See or be hung in the halter of excommunication. The Vatican also hurls its anathemas against those outside the pale of the Church who dare to exercise their own judgment touching matters of faith, though they claim to be guided by the word of God. This is the most fearful appropriation of authority of which history furnishes any record, and deserves, as it has received, the severest condemnation.

Finally, the Church of Rome has always been hostile to *every form of civil liberty*. The attitude of Lord Baltimore in these latter times does not disprove this, nor the fact that Charles Carroll of Carrollton, a Roman Catholic, signed

the Declaration of American Independence, and that many other Roman Catholics have been loyal to the principles of freedom. From the time of Innocent III. until the present, Romanism has maintained this attitude of opposition, and, wherever it has been possible, has resisted democratic rule and religious freedom. The Church claims supremacy over the State. The Church, not the people, is the source of power, and may resort to force in the maintenance of this supremacy. It may make kings the servants of its will, as when it constrained Charles IX. of France, through the influence of Catherine de Medici, to order the massacre of St. Bartholemew's Day. The history of the Inquisition, originated by Pope Gregory IX. and continued by his successors, is another outgrowth of this dogma of the Church. The kings of Spain, of France and the Netherlands, as servants of the Church, maintained the power of the "Holy Office," and fettered the limbs of their subjects. Isabella, queen of Castile, boasted that "in the love of Christ and his maid mother" she had caused great misery, and had depopulated towns and districts, provinces and kingdoms. She was obedient to the pope, and for her submission well deserved, as interpreted by Romanism, the surname of "The Catholic"—her memory in some measure relieved of the odium which attaches to it by her favor shown to Columbus, which resulted in the discovery of a New World, the home of Protestant Christianity.



JOHN WYCLIF.

*"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."*

PS. 119: 130.

*"Although all are not permitted to read the word publicly to the congregation, yet all sorts of people are bound to read it apart by themselves, and with their families: to which end, the Holy Scriptures are to be translated out of the original into the vulgar languages."*

LARGER CATECHISM, Answ. to Question 156.

## WYCLIF.

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WYCLIF has been appropriately styled "the Morning Star of the Reformation." The night of Romanism had been long. Truth had not wholly disappeared, but its influence was limited and an intelligent faith was almost unknown. Meanwhile, God reigned and waited his time. Out of the bosom of the night the morning shall be born.

This result was gradually attained. The law of growth which obtains in nature ruled in the spiritual world. First, there were the intimations of light along the horizon, then the dawn, and at last the day traveling on toward the resplendent noon. In our retrospect we are now to take our stand on the margin of the great Reformation with our faces toward the east, waiting for the morning. Conveyed in thought to that distant age, we are surrounded with the insignia of a rude civilization. Ignorance, superstition and sin control the masses. The glare of Druid altars, it is true, has disappeared. The woods and the night have ceased to resound with the howlings of pagan worship. Wodin and Thor have left their thrones, and none remain to do them reverence. The Christian faith which the preceding generations received from pious merchants who came from the Meander and the Hermas, and which the royal Alfred sedulously nourished, had lifted the people to the higher planes of

life, social and religious, but the elevation was comparatively slight. And now even the foothills of human ascent are still higher and their shadows cover the low level.

The religion of the British isles is a compound of paganism and Christianity. There is much truth in the written summary of belief, little in the apprehensions of the people, still less in their lives. False doctrines and foolish traditions have engaged attention to the neglect of fundamental truth.

But there appear signs of restlessness. Loyalty to the Roman See is less pronounced than once. The hierarchy whose seat is beyond the Alps is a waning power. The Teutonic spirit is beginning to assert itself, and drops some hints of unwilling subjection to the successor of St. Peter. Columba was England's saint, and Augustine must take an inferior place. The Synod of Whitby, which in the seventh century enforced a foreign ritual and polity, has become an unpleasant memory to many and they would modify the legacy it left or remand it to the murky Tiber. The ecclesiasticism fostered by William the Conqueror; the prevalence of Norman ideas, customs and faith; the elevation of the chair of St. Peter above the throne of the Edwards; and the humiliation of England's king,—all this is gradually stirring the slumbering spirit of the Northmen, and gathering the threads which shall yet bind the hands of popes and restrain their power in the adopted lands of the Teutons. The triumph of the Roman See in the reign of John, surnamed Lackland, which made England an estate of the papal Church and her king a vassal of the pontiff, was succeeded by a counter-victory, which in the year

1215 secured to England the Magna Charta, the cornerstone of constitutional government and pledge of popular liberty.

The way is being prepared for conquests in a higher sphere. The kingdom of Christ, in the simplicity and purity of apostolic times, is about to inaugurate a better day and perpetuate a more peaceful reign. In the beginning of the fourteenth century, wellnigh all learning confined to monasteries and a few who supported the dignity of the throne, religious truth obscured and the word of God bound, there is born one whom Heaven has chosen as a herald of a spiritual resurrection. The voice of a stern prophet is heard amid the solitudes and in the places of public concourse; and if that generation fail to witness the coming of Christ, they shall at least hear his footsteps portending the promised day. Robert Grossetete, the learned bishop of Lincoln; Henry Bracton, the eminent jurist, versed in English common law; William of Occam, the Franciscan who resisted the absolutism of the Roman hierarchy; and Thomas Bradwardine, styled the "Profound Doctor," and written in history as the "mighty champion of grace,"—all these, catching gleams of light from the cross and allured to the higher hills of religious thought, have prepared the way for loftier ascents.

John Wyclif appeared in the fullness of time, not to consummate the work of Reformation, but to announce its approach and to lead the Church toward it. As to the precise time and place of his birth, certainty has not been reached, but the approximation is quite sufficient. John Leland, an eminent historian, said, "It is

reported that John Wyclif, the heretic, was born at Spresswell, a small village a good mile off from Richmond." It is probable that his birth occurred in 1324, although some authorities indicate an earlier date. The place, located in the north-western part of the county of York, in the valley of the Tees, was beautiful for situation. Long ranges of hills overlooked the meadows, and wooded slopes extended to the river which wound peacefully toward the German Sea. The educational influence of his natural environment had not a little to do with the formation of Wyclif's character, as John Knox was influenced by the more rugged features of his northern home and John Calvin by the picturesque beauty of France and the grandeur of the Alps which girdled Lake Lemman. But there were agencies far more potential that determined his habits of thought and chiseled into impressive form his exceptional manhood. The period in which he lived, the race to which he belonged, the influence of great minds going immediately before, and, above all, the grace of God working through the inspired word, lifted him above the common level. It was well for the Church, waiting release from a cruel, relentless hierarchy, that Wyclif was born in England, of Anglo-Saxon parents, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, rather than on the Campagna divided by the Tiber, of Italian descent and in the time of Hildebrand or of Gregory X. But whilst his family possessed the sterling qualities which made the Saxons a great people, and retained many of the earlier characteristics which distinguished the Germans from the Normans, yet they were unswerving adherents to the papacy, and transmitted their devotion to the gen-

erations succeeding. Robert Wyclif, who lived in Yorkshire, a parish priest of Rudly, died in the faith of his fathers, having no sympathy with the Reformer who was his senior, commending his soul to "Almighty God, to St. Mary and to all the saints."

It is probable that Wyclif in his boyhood received instruction from the priest to whose parish his family belonged, and at a later period was sent to Oxford, even then noted for its educational advantages, though far inferior to the universities of the present. It was about the year 1335 that he entered either Baliol or Queen's College, probably the former, where he was much devoted to "logical and dialectical studies." He afterward became a fellow of Merton, and in 1361 was recalled to Baliol as its master. Theological studies had engaged much of his attention, and these compassed a wide range. He was no doubt familiar with the writings of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas and later theologians. He never acquired a knowledge of the Greek language, hence he never read the New Testament in the original text; but he was a diligent student of the Latin Vulgate. For six years, it is presumed, he was occupied with the study of theology. This period succeeded that which was devoted to general sciences. As master of Baliol he gave lectures on philosophy; as a bachelor of divinity, on biblical theology; and as warden of Canterbury Hall, on scholastic divinity. He achieved distinction in the leading university of his age as a scholar and teacher. His fame went far beyond the limits of the classic town. It was reported abroad, and correctly, that he was learned in the arts of grammar, rhetoric and logic, called the Trivium; in arithmetic,

geometry, astronomy and music, called the Quadrivium ; and was familiar with biblical theology and the canon law. Students flocked to him at Oxford from all parts of England, and he well deserved the designation which Roger Bacon had won, the *Doctor Mirabilis*. In 1361 he was made rector of Fillingham, a small parish in the county of Lincoln, but seems to have continued his residence in Oxford, assigning the larger part of his pastoral duties to a curate, yet relinquishing the mastership of Baliol.

Wyclif became conspicuous during this period in connection with a question of political right involving the relations of Church and State. His versatile mind could not be confined to a narrow field. He was a patriot whilst he was a Christian. He was especially interested in a question of church authority which infringed upon prerogatives of the throne. He seems to have been a member of the Parliament of 1361, which was occupied with the papal claim to feudatory tribute. In the previous year Pope Urban V. complained to Edward III. that for a third of a century the Crown had failed to pay, in accordance with the pledge of John, the reigning sovereign, the sum of one thousand marks annually as a rightful tribute to the Roman See. In his authority as feudal superior he demanded payment. The king referred the claim to Parliament. It embraced a question of grave significance. Shall England bow in abject submission to such a domination as this claim involves, or reject it on pain of pontifical judgments? Wyclif seems to have come to the front in the discussion and settlement of this question. It was decided that John had transcended his prerogatives, that the principle of



feudatory superiority residing in the pope was vicious, that the people were absolved from the payment of the feudal tribute, and that the claim would be resisted by the whole power of the English realm. The pope cowered before this expression of righteous indignation, and the papal assumption yielded to the dignity of the Crown. In this action Wyclif has taken issue with the Roman Church, for his hand is evidently in it, and the warden of Canterbury Hall shall suffer for his temerity.

His attitude toward the claim of Urban V. may have suggested Wyclif's appointment as a royal commissary to Bruges in 1374 to bear part in a discussion respecting the relations of the pope to English church officers and the rights of cathedral chapters, and various infringements upon the liberty of the Church. The king reposed confidence in the judgment and loyalty of the Oxford professor, and the people at large recognized the potency of his influence in questions touching the honor of the realm. The teacher of biblical theology is familiar with political theology, is versed in political affairs and is fitted to represent the kingdom in diplomatic conferences with the nuncios of the pope. This embassy introduced Wyclif to the leading city of Flanders. It was the first time he had crossed the English Channel. Bruges was a great and busy town, distinguished for the scope of its industries, the weight of its political influence, the opulence of its burghers and the luxury of its life. But the corruption of the Church must have made a still profounder impression upon this observant stranger. It was an experience similar to Luther's when he went from his secluded home in Saxony to Rome, the seat of papal jurisdiction. It had

something to do with Wyclif's subsequent relations to the hierarchy that fostered iniquity and hurled anathemas upon those who disputed its power. Wyclif's course as commissary did not commend him to the Italian diplomats or to pontifical favor, nor did the results of the conference materially inure to the benefit of the Anglican Church. But this did not terminate the protest against papal encroachments upon the rights of the English cathedrals, the promotion through bribery of incompetent foreigners, the discriminations in favor of the latter in the apportionment of salaries and the sacrificing of the sacred interests of the Church to the avarice which bought the favor of Rome. The disaffection extended, and in 1376 the Good Parliament voiced the public dissatisfaction in tones that awakened the papal court to the gravity of the situation. Wyclif was a member of the Parliament. He championed the rights of the national Church in opposition to the infringements of the papal throne, and grew more prominent as the controversy advanced.

Soon after this he received a summons to appear before the clerical convocation which was to meet in London. On Thursday, Feb. 19, 1377, the convocation assembled in the street and obstructed the entrance to the great cathedral. At length Wyclif appeared on the slope of Ludgate Hill, the most conspicuous figure in the imposing procession. The duke of Lancaster, his friend, walked at his side. Behind him were armed custodians wearing helmets and swords. Following these were mendicant monks and a goodly company friendly to the Oxford preacher. They found their way with difficulty through the jostling multitude, and at last reached the

chapel, where the dignified bishop, with dukes and barons, awaited his coming. Wyclif stood in the imposing court, a thoughtful man, slender in person, much above the medium stature, clad in a black gown which reached to the floor, and wearing a heavy beard, full and long, imparting strength to a face which betokened the profound student, the unswerving patriot and the devout Christian—a heroic man who could die for the truth, but would not deny it, his calm searching eyes fixed on the bishop of London, who scowled scornfully upon the culprit at his bar. Then followed a scene of conflict between the court and some of the Reformer's friends, in which Wyclif bore no part. The duke of Lancaster was especially violent in his address to the bishop, and the latter replied in terms quite unbefitting his high office. The report of the personal conflict circulated on the streets, raising a popular indignation in which one party was arrayed against another, each threatening to resort to deeds of violence. Wild commotion prevailed until the princess of Wales interposed and secured peace. Meanwhile, attention was diverted from Wyclif; the court had adjourned, and the result suggests a familiar line in the chief of Latin poets: "*Parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus.*" Three months after this failure of the convocation to arrest the work of Wyclif (May 22, 1377) Gregory XI., persuaded of his power to do what the English bishops did not accomplish, in the splendid cathedral of San Maria Maggiore at Rome issued five bulls against the Reformer, directing the imprisonment of Wyclif in case it should be established that he was the author of certain theses which disputed rights, secular and spiritual, inherent in the Church of Rome. This

procedure was probably instigated by the English bishops, who had wrought with marvelous cunning a net in which they hoped to entrap Wyclif and suddenly terminate his power. That he was advancing in popular favor was apparent, and the strong arm of the pontifical throne must arrest a career which portended only evil to the apostolic Church. But Gregory failed in his purpose. England sympathized with Wyclif rather than with the successor to St. Peter, and the bulls fell harmless to the ground.

Thereafter, Wyclif devoted himself to a work that was more spiritual. He did not crave distinction as a patriot nor as a political reformer, so much as he desired to help release the Church from the domination of the papal hierarchy and spread abroad a knowledge of the truth. He now appears as a spiritual teacher, traveling the world's wilderness, predicting a better day and leading toward it—a day whose faint gleam fell on his path, and was granted to others also through his agency, but only when, released from the blinding influence of error, they looked adoringly at the greatest sight that has ever greeted mortal eyes—"the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

We are now to study the life of Wyclif in its more direct relations to Bible truth in opposition to the false teachings of Rome. The Oxford professor grew more conspicuous as a Reformer, advancing beyond the superstitious beliefs of early years, and modifying, if he did not wholly renounce, the grosser errors of the papal Church. He came by gradual steps and a deliberate ascent from a realm wrapped with mist to the high table-

lands of revelation, where the light was clearer and the air relieved of its spiritual chill.

As the years advanced he manifested a growing disposition to part company with the papal hierarchy, though he never entirely broke his connection with the Romish Church. He refused to recognize the right of the Roman pontiff to exercise authority over the universal Church, although he had previously consented to it as a temporary expedient. But in 1378, when dissensions arose in the Church, and the French cardinals, assembled at Fondi, elected a pope of their own, violently opposing the successor of Gregory XI. and his adherents, he expressed the opinion that both Urban VI. and Clement VII. were false popes. They were apostates and limbs of the devil, instead of members of the body of Christ. How, then, could either of them rightfully claim to be the successor of St. Peter or the vicegerent of the ascended Lord? He denounced the hierarchy as an institution of the Wicked One, and he longed for its extinction. This was a pivotal point in the life of the Reformer.

From opposition to the papacy he passed to a renunciation of some of its essential dogmas. He had long given earnest thought to the church doctrine of the Lord's Supper. At length he arrived at the conclusion that it was unscriptural and to be rejected. He insisted that the consecrated host on the altar was neither Christ nor any part of him. This was a rejection of transubstantiation. It was a bold step, but he did not hesitate to take it. It was not done without earnest and prolonged consideration, and, having taken it, he maintained his advanced position. He was not moved by impulse,

and he could not be intimidated by threats. The storm of indignation his theses against the accepted doctrine raised in Oxford, the condemnation of his heresy by a council of doctors of theology and mendicant monks, and the mandate prohibiting the teaching of so fundamental an error on pain of excommunication and imprisonment, did not move him, and although his mouth was closed his pen sent forth vigorous arguments against transubstantiation, and their circulation was more widely extended than if he had simply maintained them within the walls of the university. It does not appear from any of Wyclif's writings or from the teachings of the Church that the withholding of the cup from the laity had as yet received ecclesiastical approval, nor that the doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass as a satisfaction for sin had been incorporated in the Romish creed. Hence his attack was made upon the first of the trinity of errors which subsequently corrupted the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. He insisted that transubstantiation, an "accident without a substance, was neither taught in the word of God nor supported by tradition," and that for the memorial feast instituted by Christ there was substituted the "abomination of desolation." Transubstantiation was contrary to all analogy of speech and to reason. When Christ said at the Supper, "This is my body," a literal meaning was no more intended than when he said, "I am the vine" or "I am the door." It was blasphemous also to hold that a priest by a silent signal of his will could convert the wafer into the actual body of our Lord, and to believe it involved the sin of idolatry.

In all this, though there is somewhat of indefiniteness



in his teachings, Wyclif stands prominently forth as the advocate of a divinely-instituted and spiritual observance of the Lord's Supper. He seems to have held a more scriptural view of this ordinance than did Martin Luther or John Calvin, approaching the theory taught by Zwingli, but more nearly in accord with the belief now generally held by Protestant Christendom. The Lollards accepted his interpretation of the Lord's Supper, and, largely through their influence, it was continued during succeeding generations. It is not regarded as absolute truth, but a near approximation to it, which prepared the way for the elimination of the grave errors which had deformed the sacrament and opened the door to the holy place of communion with Christ and his elect.

As a lecturer on divinity in the university at Oxford Wyclif had attracted much attention. By many he was heard with mild approval, whilst some esteemed him an oracle whose words it were folly to gainsay and wicked to deny. He insisted that in the determination of truth there must be a ground of ultimate and unmistakable appeal. He did not repudiate reason, but held that it alone could not discover truth. The light of nature has its place, and he would accept its helpful offices, but the word of God is the final and infallible basis of belief. "Thus it is written." He sought to be a biblical preacher. He listened to the divine voice, and followed where it led. He reported his own convictions, returning from the wide fields of revelation as he had been able to explore them, laden with the fruits of pious research as were the spies with the fruits of Canaan.

Although he was unacquainted with the original lan-

guages of the Old and New Testaments, he excelled in his knowledge of the Latin tongue and was familiar with the Scriptures as rendered in the Vulgate. In the university his preaching was adapted to the minds he addressed and was in the language with which scholars were acquainted. But Latin sermons were unintelligible to the greater multitude beyond the walls of the university. Lutterworth was at a far remove from Oxford, though in geographical miles near by, and his humble parish was the representative of widespread and urgent need. The doctor whom the learned esteemed great condescended in order that he might be useful, preaching in simple terms, in self-forgetfulness, supporting every statement of truth by the word of God, which abideth for ever.

He expressed his opposition to a style of public discourse, prevalent in his day, which in some of its features is not wholly unknown in our time. It has been said of some preachers in the nineteenth century that they go to the Bible for their texts and to Seneca or Herbert Spencer for their sermons. Speculative philosophy furnishes the staple to many homilies, or illustrations drawn from natural sciences and obsolete history obscure for the popular mind the truth its need demands. In other instances the dignity of the pulpit is sacrificed to a low taste, and men commissioned to preach the gospel with a seriousness begotten of a sense of responsibility to God and of the momentous interests involved, play the buffoon before a gaping crowd, whilst souls perish and Heaven weeps. But this, which is exceptional in our age, was common in Wyclif's day. Against such a prostitution of the sacred office he entered his solemn



protest. Old wives' fables, silly traditions, stories about the saints and the miracles they wrought, incidents extracted from the story-writers which were as puerile as misleading, with an occasional recourse to the myths of heathen creation,—these occupied the hour designated for pulpit instruction. The benches were filled, the treasury was enriched, the people applauded and the preacher was content. The earnest, spiritual preaching of the word, accompanied with the unction born of communion with God; the preaching that recognized man's sinful and helpless condition, a death in trespasses and in sins, with a solemn intimation of that doom which for those who perish shall sweep the endless years; the preaching which conformed in large measure to that of Christ, who came to save the lost, and held all truth affectionately yet impressively on the border-line of eternity,—such preaching would, for a time at least, terminate the popularity of the pulpit and empty the pews. But Wyclif believed it was the power of God unto salvation, and that the preacher was recreant to his trust and would carry the blood of souls in his skirts to the bar of God unless he preached the preaching the Master had bidden him. Wyclif sought to reform the pulpit. His own idea may not have been wholly scriptural, but it made a long advance toward it, and the result was an ultimate benediction to England. He rejected an unintelligible scholasticism on the one side and a foolish charlatanism on the other. He put little dependence on the graces of oratory and the refinements of rhetoric, but desired to go in humble speech to the sources of saving truth, baptized with the power which comes from God and conducts to him. The Reformation must begin in the pulpit. He put his convictions into

the concrete form of a personal example. The rector of Lutterworth, pale and thoughtful, himself an inquirer after truth, satisfied there was something better for him and his hearers a little farther on, drew his inspiration from the Sacred Scriptures and sought to impart a spiritual knowledge to souls that would die eternally without it. His own declaration was that "in every proclamation of the gospel the true teacher must address himself to the heart, so as to flash the light into the spirit of the hearer and to bend his will into obedience to the truth."

It is claimed by some that Wyclif never attained to a full comprehension of the gospel, though he was in advance of his age. It is not improbable that the Aristotelian philosophy, which exalted human works and diverted the Romish Church from the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ alone, had obscured his views of the cross. But there is reason to conclude from his writings, in which he magnifies the work of Christ, that he not only possessed that docility which is a preparation for the revelations of Calvary, but that he had actually gone to its rocky summit and taken his outlook of heaven from thence. He did not see as clearly as did Luther, nor did he formulate his faith as definitely as did Calvin, but he saw the outlines of truth in the gray dawn, and helped his successors to a clearer apprehension of the Christian system than he himself had acquired. His modes of expression were not those of modern theology. Yet his apprehensions of truth were substantially those of the nineteenth century. His Christology maintained the incomparable glory of the Messiah, the "Cæsar always Augustus," the

One altogether lovely, the only Mediator between God and men, and a mighty Conqueror whose steps are Titanic, a greater than Alexander, the like of whom had never crossed the track of the ages. Some of his expressions, epigrammatic and fragrant with the grace of Christ, are repeated to-day by many who have never learned their origin, and the roots of some of our choicest sacred lyrics are found in the pulpit of Lutterworth, of which we may instance one: "This I suffer for thee; what dost thou suffer for me?"

There seems at times a cold severity in Wyclif's presentation of truth. His denunciations of the corruptions of the Church were often fearful and calculated to arouse bitter antagonism to his work of reform. But we should not judge the fourteenth century in the light of the nineteenth. The former was a rude age. Rude weapons and heavy blows were not only permitted, but required. Opposition to error thundered at the gates. The battering-ram did effective service. The sleep of ages could be broken only by the shock of earthquakes. The age in which the still small voice would prove more effective had not come. Even John Knox did not live to see it. Yet the preacher of Lutterworth was by no means lacking in that tender love of souls and that profound sympathy with a misguided people which must ever be the chief elements of pulpit power. There is great sweetness in his portrayals of Christ in the offices of prophet, priest and king. There were the breathings of a brother's affection in his endeavors to direct the attention of the hungry and athirst to Him in whom all fullness dwells. His work, it is admitted, was largely that of a destructionist, and it was reserved for others to build on founda-

tions relieved of superstructures that were false and dangerous. But this was not his exclusive mission. He declared the truth; he exalted the word of God. To tradition he assigned an inferior place. The decrees of councils were of no authority if they were in conflict with the teachings of the Scriptures. The consensus of Christendom deserved attention, but was to be received with caution. The Bible was the sufficient guide of conduct, the only infallible rule of faith. The "Mixtim theology" followed an *ignis fatuus*, and its teachers were blind leaders of the blind. Wyclif sought to preach an unadulterated gospel, and that he might answer each inquiry after truth he compared scripture with scripture and maintained the attitude of devout discipleship in the school of Christ that he might instruct others. Attention should be called to Wyclif's extension of the truth by means of preaching itinerants. He sent forth a class of men fitted to teach and in sympathy with his religious views, who sought to influence public sentiment in the interests of reform and to conduct the people to the sources of saving knowledge. He insisted that they should not preach tales of saints nor descant about Trojan wars, but take their texts from the Bible and exalt Christ as Mediator and Lawgiver. These itinerants with unshod feet, clad in russet gowns, carrying staves, disregarded the usual conventionalities of the priesthood, and without the authority of the Church preached in places of public gathering, in chapels that would admit them, in churchyards and wherever they could secure audience. Trained for their work, probably in Oxford at the first, they were instructed that it was their office and duty faithfully, freely and truly to preach

God's word. Their influence was widely felt. Some of them were men of marked ability, and the most of them were exceptionally devout. But they incurred the displeasure of the archbishop of Canterbury, William Courtenay, who in the exercise of his episcopal authorization commanded them to desist from their work. It was disorderly. They had not obtained the usual authority to teach, which could be given only by the Church. Besides, it was reported that they preached heretical doctrines, and relaxed, if they did not sever, the ties which had bound the people to the papal Church. The air of piety which was a marked characteristic of the itinerants commended them to many, and their enthusiasm was so great and won for them such success that it was said—with exaggeration, however—that “every second man in England was a Lollard.” The pilgrim-preachers journeyed on, repeating refreshing messages to souls that had long fed on husks and bowed at the nod of the papal tiara or followed the beck of a corrupt priesthood into the desert of formalism. This system of itinerancy—which had been previously practiced among the Waldenses, of which fact the Reformers probably had no knowledge—was renewed four centuries later, and John Wyclif again appeared in the person and work of John Wesley.

The men whom our Reformer educated for evangelistic work were at a far remove, as respects the subject-matter of their preaching and the spirit which prompted their service, from the monks and friars, the black and gray, who were numerous as the leaves of Vallombrosa,—men who thronged the entrances to the great cathedrals, and surrounded the seats of political power, and

frequented the purlieus of the city and the country roads. As a class they were corrupt, and corrupted all whom they influenced. Many of these, though clad in garments of poverty, accumulated wealth, and others aspired to worldly power and luxurious living.

Wyclif sympathized at first with the mendicant monks in distinction from the old endowed orders, and vindicated their habits of life ; and this he did for many years, although there is not sufficient evidence that he stimulated or favored the peasants' insurrection, which these friars supported. But when he came to know them better, and especially after they resisted every effort to restore a pure Christianity, traded in indulgences and absolutions and taught that almsgiving might be a substitute for spirituality, he turned against them and sought to break their influence. Of them he humorously said that the Scriptures never referred to them except in the text, "I know you not." In a sickness which it was supposed would terminate fatally a monk visited him, hoping to secure his recantation, but Wyclif promptly rose in his bed and said, "I shall not die, but live to declare the works of the begging friars."

We now come to Wyclif's greatest work, the translation of the Holy Scriptures into the English tongue. In opposition to the Church of Rome he believed the Bible should be circulated among the people in their own language. God had not intended that it should be the possession of the priesthood only, or that its use by the laity should be contingent on priestly permission. To the translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular of the people he devoted twenty years of vigorous life. The Psalter had been translated into the Saxon language in



a preceding century, and had attained a limited circulation. But it was reserved for Wyclif to give to the people the word of God in its entirety. He had only the Latin Bible of Jerome. Unacquainted with the original languages, he could have received no aid from manuscripts to which he may have had no access. In his translation of the Old Testament he was assisted to some extent, by Nicholas Hereford. He began with the Apocalypse, his favorite study, and included the Apocrypha along with the canonical books. At length (in 1382) the work was completed. The translation was not all that he desired, and he entered upon a revision which was carried on by John Purvey and completed about six years later. The printing-press was unknown, and copies were made by the slower process of the age. But many pens were employed, and the multiplication of the word of God was hastened. There remain one hundred and seventy of the copies of Wyclif's translation until the present. One may be seen in the Lenox Library in New York. The flames have not been permitted to consume them and the centuries have not obliterated the handwriting. The Bible was precious in those days. It required nearly two hundred dollars to buy a single copy. It was beyond the reach of the poor, except as they had access to the house of the wealthy or families united in its purchase.

The Reformation was born of the work Wyclif accomplished. It was then the Romish Church heard its death-knell. It was evident that the circulation of the Scriptures would lead to the exercise of private judgment, and private judgment would destroy the power of the hierarchy. It was the Vulgate indeed

which had been rendered into the language of the English people, and the Vulgate was the accepted translation of the Church. But it was for the use of the priesthood only, and by them it was to be interpreted. Its general circulation was a profanation of the Sacred Oracles. Knowledge would dig the grave of Romish devotion. Hence the Church summoned all her strength to put an end to the threatening evil. Knyton reflected the prevailing sentiment of the papacy when he thus discoursed concerning the Bible: "This Master John Wyclif translated it out of Latin into the Anglican, not the angelic tongue, and thus laid it more open to the laity and to women who could read than it had formerly been to the most learned of the clergy, or even to those of them that had the best understanding. And in this way the gospel pearl is cast abroad and trodden under foot of swine; that which was before precious both to clergy and laity is rendered as it were the common jest of both. The jewel of the Church is turned into the common sport of the people, and what was hitherto the principal gift of the clergy and divines is made for ever common to the laity." So said all who were loyal to the Roman See and had incorporated papal corruptions with their life's blood.

The leading ecclesiastics assembled at St. Paul's church, London, in 1408, and pronounced the reading of Wyclif's translation a heresy punishable by excommunication, imprisonment, death. At once the air seemed filled with anathemas; prison-doors swung on their hinges and fagots were gathered for the burning. Wyclif and the Lollards might cry out against the vices of the clergy and the sins of the people, but let



him that circulates or reads in his own tongue the word of God be accursed. Rome dreaded the Bible as night the rising sun. Rome dreads it now. The priest may still read extracts from the word, and interpret them to the people, but a complete Bible would smite the throne of the papacy and break the bands of ignorance asunder. In this the animus of the papacy is seen. It has not changed with the passage of the centuries. The Bible-house stands to-day on the Corso in Rome, but the pope, if it were in his power, would bury it deeper than the Catacombs, and the Church would sing a *Te Deum* over its grave. It is true the Bible circulates to some extent in Italy, throughout papal Europe and goes abroad over the earth speaking in the tongues of all the nations, but the Church of Rome, if it were possible, would terminate this contact of the truth with popular thought and inquiry for ever. The reasons are obvious: Rome loves darkness rather than light, because her deeds are evil.

Wyclif's translation inaugurated a new era in the land of the Saxons. It opened visions of the past, and mind communed with mind separated by ages. Again the father of the faithful pitches his tent on the plains of Mamre, and redeemed Israel travels the paths of the wilderness beyond the cloven sea. Again David sings his now plaintive, now joyous psalms, and his royal son puts into flowing numbers, enriched with imagery warm and bright as the overarching Orient, his estimate of the Beloved. Again Isaiah goes to the hill-top of inspiration with his face toward the east, and, catching a faint gleam of the dawn, utters seraphic prophecies concerning the Child, the Son, whose name is Wonderful, the

Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; and Micah, when the son of Amos is asleep with his fathers, climbs the same summit and points to Bethlehem hard by the wood of Ephratah, and lo! He is born for whom the Church had waited through four thousand years. Nay, more than that: Wyclif's Bible brought the historic Christ to view—the true Bishop of souls, the only Pontiff of the Church, the world's only Saviour; and He whom Rome had hidden or misrepresented walks abroad among men, thorn-crowned and nail-pierced, yet living who was dead, unbounded love in his heart, forgiveness in his speech, benedictions on his lips, pointing the weary and sin-burdened and homesick to a land of rest and beauty not afar off. Well did Wyclif say, "To be ignorant of the Scriptures is to be ignorant of Christ." Ah, we who have our Bible in church and home and closet, speaking whenever we will listen, bringing light and comfort, inspiring hope and revealing heaven, can form but a poor conception of what Wyclif's Bible was to the few who gained access to it.

Then, as has been often suggested, Wyclif's translation of the Scriptures greatly elevated English literature, and its fruitage has been gathered in the wide world of letters from his day to ours. It was to England what Luther's Bible was to Germany, and stands at the head of the "Middle English;" and it is the grateful admission of the nineteenth century "that if Chaucer is the father of our Later-English poetry, Wyclif is the father of our Later-English prose." One of the silver-tongued orators of the New World is in full accord with the German biographers when, referring to Wyclif's Bible, which, although circumscribed in its immediate influence,

was born in England to stay, he says: "There was the English Renaissance. Leighton and Owen and Jeremy Taylor became possible afterward—Bacon and Hooker, Shakespeare and Milton, Dryden and Wordsworth, and Robert Burns. The world of letters had found a language for the magnetic periods of Burke, for Addison's and Macaulay's prose, for Gibbon's sentences, moving as with the tread of an imperial triumph."

Now Wyclif's work is done. He did not fear martyrdom. For righteousness' sake he would have embraced it joyfully. But he died in his bed on the 31st of December, 1384, and his remains were reverently laid near the Lutterworth pulpit, but not to rest in peace. Thirty years later, in 1415, the Council of Constance, which condemned John Huss and Jerome of Prague and burnt them outside the city-gate, ordered Wyclif's books to be destroyed and his bones to be exhumed and burned. Pope Martin V. commanded Fleming, bishop of Lincoln, to execute the decree, and it was done, but not until 1428. The harmless bones were consumed and the ashes were thrown into the Swift.

"The Avon to the Severn runs,  
The Severn to the sea,  
And Wyclif's dust shall spread abroad  
Wide as the waters be."

The influence of the Oxford scholar, the diligent author and the faithful pastor of Lutterworth, whom Milton styled "the divine and admirable Wyclif," has reached far as the sea that received his mortal remains. Out of it sprang the Reformation in Germany and the *evangel* that sang its heaven-inspired numbers among the moun-

tains of Switzerland. The East received its light from the West, the continent from the seagirt isle, and a later age transmitted it to lands beyond the Atlantic.

Some may insist that this is an unwarranted claim in Wyclif's behalf. But it were to misread history and to misinterpret the law of progress in the spiritual kingdom to conclude that his work died with him, saying, as did Rome when his bones turned to ashes, "That is the end of him." The immediate results of his work were not great. The light along the hills was faint and soon obscured. No king arose to maintain the truth by the might and influence of regal power. No potential scholars pleaded in its behalf. No agencies, such as afterward appeared, multiplied the words of life and repeated them in every home. Wyclif stood well-nigh alone. He was a solitary star shining in a clouded sky. Nevertheless, his work lived after him. If to some it seem a subterranean potency, unseen and unfelt, yet even they admit that it reappeared in a deeper, broader channel, on its surface the gleam of heaven and along its margin the trees of life. The old university town in which he had spent the most of his life never quite escaped the influence of his teachings. Fathers told the story of his life to their sons. The bonfire which consumed the volumes his laborious pen had written failed to destroy all the products of his busy brain and hand. Even the Avon as it sped on its way helped to keep his memory in the hearts of men, and the Severn sang it to those who passed by. The Bible in England's vernacular lived on. The voices of St. Paul's church which condemned it were as impotent as the decrees which issued from the Dominican convent

near by. The Lollards carried it under their rough mantles, and read it beside hearthstones and under the trees. The sheen of a better day grew along the horizon. It crossed the Channel and reached even to the valleys of Bohemia. The priest of Prague in the scholastic centre of Europe saw it, and in its light spelled out the story of the cross. The Wittenberg monk caught the gleam from afar. God was not in haste. The vision tarried, and the world waited for it. It came at the appointed time, and did not tarry. Instead of the night was the morning, and in these last times the day is traveling gloriously on.

Wyclif was truly great. We owe more to him than most of us have supposed. We are occupied with the wealth of thought and blessing which flows like a river through our lives, and forget too often its source, under God, in the study of the Oxford professor and the rectory of Lutterworth. The "grand old man, the illustrious pioneer of Reform in England," who stands out to the view of posterity in "solitary and mysterious loneliness," is a Mount Ararat on the pathway of the ages, the first to catch the pencilings of light which betokened the day. He was in advance of his age. He saw the summits of oncoming events which men of lower intellect never saw. In drastic speech Milton asseverated that "if the stiff-necked obstinacy of our prelates had not obstructed Wyclif's sublime and exalted spirit, the names of the Bohemian Huss and Hieronymus, and even of Luther and Calvin, would at this day have been buried in obscurity, and the glory of having reformed our neighbors would have been ours alone." We lay our grateful tribute of praise at his feet, and thank God who gave

him to these latter ages, as he gave Moses to Israel and Paul to the Gentile world.

History gives us but a glimpse of the spiritual life of the mediæval doctor. If he is not known to the Church as a religious genius, like some who lived in cloisters and spent their days in devout meditation, yet he may have held quite as much intercourse with Heaven. He seems to have been exempt, in a measure quite uncommon, from those blemishes of character which have marred the memory of many saints. Some of his enemies were conspicuous men whose words have lived until now. But none of them have put on record a single sentence which questions the integrity of his life. They hated the heretic; they paid unwilling homage to his personal goodness. He was born in a Church which carried with it a sepulchral chill, and he never left it. He had but little in his intercourse with the ecclesiastics of his age to help him up the slopes of a Christ-like life. But he evidently grew in holiness amid surroundings so unfavorable, as some plants thrive in poor soil and as pines grow tall on mountain-summits, rocked by passing storms. To maintain a blameless life and escape defamation in such an age, imperiling his life in the interest of truth, marks him as a rare witness to the power of divine grace.

In a missal in the library at Prague, Wyclif is represented at the top of an engraving kindling a spark. In the centre Huss is blowing it into a flame. At the foot Luther is waving the torch aloft. All honor to the Reformer who prepared the way for the Reformation, after whom, wearing his mantle, came Huss, Jerome, Savonarola, Luther, Calvin, Cranmer and Knox, completing



the work the lone Englishman began. Thanks be to God that he interrupted the long night, breathing into the ears of the few who were faithful the promise of better things, when Wyclif appeared, "the Morning Star of the Reformation"!





SAVONAROLA.

*“ Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils ; speaking lies in hypocrisy ; having their conscience seared with a hot iron ; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.”*

I TIM. 4. 1-3.

*“ The purest churches under heaven are subject to mixture and error ; and some have so degenerated, as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless, there shall be always a church on earth to worship God according to his will.”*

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXV. SEC. V.

## SAVONAROLA

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GOD works in multiform ways. He spake at sundry times and in divers manners unto the fathers by the prophets, leading them on to the more glorious dispensation of his Son. By a similar process he accomplished the great Reformation. He employed agencies that were quite unlike. He wrought along lines which seemed divergent. But, like the weaver who employs threads of different colors and texture and follows the flying shuttle with the crush of the falling beam, and at last completes the fabrics which adorn the palaces of kings, so God by various means and seemingly conflicting providences restored the gospel to Europe and the adjacent isles. All things under his superintending providence worked together for the consummation of his purpose and the good of his Church.

Girolamo Savonarola possessed the spirit of John Wyclif and transferred it to Martin Luther. But whilst his work prepared the way for the triumphs of truth in a later generation, he represented a factor in the final result which differentiated his work from that of his English predecessor and the greater Reformer of Germany. He did not oppose the Church, but he set the might of his intellect, the fervor of his eloquence and the integrity of his life against every form of sin. He was occupied with the fruits of errors rather than

with their source. Wyclif opposed false doctrine by the word of God, and, continuing in the Church, sought to recover truth. Martin Luther attacked both error and sin, and separated himself from the Church which was corrupt, persuaded that reform could be secured from without and never from within. He responded to the call which to him seemed to ring out over the plains of Saxony and repeat itself through the Thuringian forests: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord."

Some are slow to assign Savonarola a place among the Reformers. His work was an apparent failure. His life was like to the northern aurora which flashes along the arch of night, then drops back into darkness. But men may live when they are dead. Streams may wind out of our sight and then reappear in wider and deeper flow. Savonarola was one of God's most honored instruments of radical and lasting reform. In the city of Worms may be seen the conspicuous Luther monument, and in the clustering group around him, noble in bearing, looking afar off, is the Dominican monk who electrified Italy with his eloquence and shook the throne of iniquity by the earthquake of his holy rebuke.

Girolamo Savonarola was born at Ferrara, October 12, 1452. His lineage was honorable. He received careful religious education in the home, was instructed in the best available schools and was early distinguished for genius and learning.

The historic city of Ferrara is situated in Northern Italy, near the Apennines, and at a short remove from the more noted city of Venice, the Queen of the Adriatic. Girolamo was often observed walking the narrow

streets of his native city, lingering in the shade of high balconies, lost in thought, taking little notice of the crowd that jostled him along the way. Yet he was occupied with facts he had gathered from observation of the times in which he lived. A careful scrutiny of character and life about him led him to profound meditation upon the condition and needs he had discovered. He was more given to the study of men than to that of books. The disputes of Schoolmen and the speculations of philosophers were in his esteem of little account. They did not touch real life and help it up to higher grounds. Yet among those scholastics who were eminently holy, as he thought, was Thomas Aquinas, the "Angelic Doctor." Girolamo longed to live the life of the departed saint and to awaken his generation to like aspirations.

Near by his home lived a noble Florentine who accounted himself specially honored in his ancestry and his early association with the élite. He had a daughter who was possessed of rare beauty of person, and Girolamo thought the outward grace was an expression of inward excellence. He occasionally met her on the narrow street or saw her looking down upon him from the balcony of her pretentious home. Soon there came into his heart a deep and idolizing affection for the nobleman's daughter. But she was proud; her family was nobler than Savonarola's. She refused the youth who had sought her regard. The hope which had inspired the recent months went out, and dark shadows fell on all the prospects of a happy domesticity. That event was a pivot on which the life of Girolamo turned. It gave a new complexion to his future, and, diverted from the

way his heart devised, God led him into a life by which he made himself a name for ever.

His grandfather, Michael Savonarola, had been physician to one of the dukes of the house of Este. The duke had solicited his removal from Padua to Ferrara, received him to his court and honored him for his learning and professional skill. Girolamo's parents had wished their son to become heir to ancestral distinction, and as a physician in Ferrara be the support and solace of their age. But all his plans of life were frustrated by a disappointed hope. The world's attraction was gone. He had nothing to live for except the culture of his spiritual life and the good of his generation. The medical profession did not attract him, nor did it promise results he desired to achieve. He was not indifferent to the wishes of his parents. He loved them tenderly. His mother was more to him than all the world besides. But there was a voice he thought he could not mistake, the voice of God, calling him away from the shelter of the home-roof and the fond embraces of parental love. Along a path that seemed rugged, conducting into solitude and deepening shadows—a path that might ultimately lead out into a broader place and more helpful service—he must take his lonely way. An evening came to Ferrara which seemed strangely quiet. Girolamo looked thoughtfully out into the night. He dropped some words which failed to reveal what his throbbing heart would not permit him to utter. The mother was oppressed by a presentiment of some approaching sorrow. The next night, succeeding a festal day in Ferrara, Nicholas Savonarola and his wife found a paper among Girolamo's books which they read through their tears.

It told them of their son's plan of life. God called and he could not disobey. While they communed together a young traveler was knocking at the door of the Dominican monastery in Bologna, a day's journey toward the south. It was Girolamo Savonarola. The date of his entrance to the monastery was April 24, 1475, in the twenty-third year of his age. Soon the post carried a message home. Girolamo explained his sudden departure: "If I had laid open my breast to you, I verily believe that the very idea that I was going to leave you would have broken my heart." He also stated the motive which had determined his course—"the misery of the world" and "the iniquities of men." "I could not endure the enormous wickedness of the blinded people of Italy, and the more so because I saw everywhere virtue despised and vice honored." He had hoped in the monastery to be surrounded with men devoted to holy pursuits—men who communed with Him who is invisible and lived under the power of the world to come. In all this he was sadly disappointed. The enchantment which distance gave to a monastic life disappeared. It was evident that the spirit of the world had entered the solitude of the convent. The rough garment of the Dominicans could not hide their native depravity. Devout attitudes and solemn prayer uttered by thoughtless lips failed to correct the trend and outward expression of unmoved hearts. He was disappointed, as was the monk of Wittenberg at Rome. The monastery at Bologna was a cage of unclean birds. The life of the world in a quiet current, yet deep, flowed through the seclusion of convent-life, polluting whatever it touched. Exceptional piety may have existed even there. Down



the long line of cells there may have been found a Thomas Aquinas or John Staupitz, or one who sought, though he may not have reached, the higher experiences of a holy consecration. Where there is one Girolamo there may be another. But the Dominican monastery was a Sodom. Savonarola had forecasted the world's doom when he mingled with the godless people of Ferrara and heard reports from other parts of virtueless Italy. Now, in contact with the corruptness of the Church in conditions supposed to be most favorable for the cultivation of holiness, he is even more appalled by the threatening clouds which gather over the future, and in a poetic dissertation concerning *De Ruina Ecclesie*, he sounds the first notes of an alarm which is yet to cross the Apennines and rouse the displeasure of the Holy See.

For seven years he dwelt in the convent. He was occupied with the study of Plato and Aristotle, and wrote long disquisitions on philosophy which revealed his rare genius as well as his familiarity with the teachings of the Academy and the Lyceum. But he seems to have assigned the Sacred Scriptures the highest place in his regard and to have devoted to them his most thoughtful hours. Speculative philosophy, which attained its culmination in the golden age of Athens and Attica, was but a dim, uncertain rushlight in comparison with the clear shining of revelation which interpreted the past, illumined the future and answered the profoundest questionings of the human heart. Much as he had valued the dialectics of Aquinas, he preferred to sit at the feet of St. Paul and commune with the great teacher who came from God. Hence he sought to inspire the monks of Bologna with



reverence for the word of God—for revelation in its entirety and dependence of parts, though separated by ages. His efforts were not wholly in vain. His lectures on philosophy secured him the respectful regard of his pupils. His communings with God through the inspired volume opened to them visions of spiritual excellence which beckoned them away from the superstition, formality and sensuousness of their monastic life. But his sphere of influence was narrow. He yearned for greater things. He saw in the distance the possibilities of moral potency which turned to prophecies, and there entered into the privacy of his cell the radiance of a grander future.

Then there came rumors of gigantic crimes in the world he had left behind him. A little later the Pazzi conspiracy was an established fact. The two Medici were assailed in the height of their power. In the church of Santa Maria del Fiore, in Florence, during the celebration of the mass, Giuliano was slain. Lorenzo was also smitten by one of the priests, but the stiletto reached no vital part and he escaped. The nepotism of Pope Sixtus IV. suffered defeat. His family, whom he had hoped to advance to power, reaching it over the dead bodies of the Medici, was deeply chagrined by the failure. Had the assassin struck with an unerring aim, the result would have been all the pope and his priestly agents had sought. But Lorenzo lived to inflict a bloody revenge. The archbishop of Pisa, who had directed the assassination, his ecclesiastical robes mocking his death-agony, was hung in the view of the populace gathered in the Palazzo Vecchio, and hundreds of conspirators were executed for their crime. Then Sixtus IV. thundered

his anathemas in the ears of Florence. All Italy trembled for a little as if shaken by an internal convulsion. The quiet which followed was a premonition of future storms. Other scenes of opposition to papal favoritism will be enacted on the ground stained with Giuliano's blood, and in these Fra Girolamo shall bear a notable part. The young monk was profoundly moved by the reports of the conspiracy the Church had instigated and its sanguinary sequel. But his time for action had not yet come.

Convent days crept on. The seven years were numbered. Savonarola spoke his farewell to the Dominicans of Bologna, his voice trembling with emotion; for, despite all the sadness connected with the venerable monastery, he had come to love it as Bonnivard loved his prison.

From Bologna he proceeded at once to Ferrara. It was in January, 1482, that he arrived at his native city. He had not come to resume his early home-life or to rest from his labors among the scenes of other days. He had consecrated himself to God and the highest interests of his race. Seven years had not effaced from the minds of the people their early impressions of Girolamo, the thoughtful youth of Ferrara, and when it was announced that he would preach to such as might care to listen, many who remembered the son of Nicholas Savonarola hastened to the designated place. But it was mere curiosity that brought them, and that satisfied, the most of them ceased to come. It does not appear that his preaching was marked by the eloquence which attracted attention in later years. He was still young, scarce thirty years of age. His speech was rude and his

manner awkward. Many loved him for his beauty of character, his manifest sympathy with men and his yearning for their good. But his ministry was unsuccessful, and when Ferrara became involved in war with Venice, for which Sixtus IV. was largely responsible, the Dominican monks of Ferrara were scattered abroad and Fra Girolamo was sent to Florence, the beautiful capital of Tuscany. Here he was received at the noted convent of San Marco. His reputation as a teacher had preceded him, and in the monastery of Florence he resumed the service he had performed at Bologna. A year later he was made Lenten preacher in the church of San Lorenzo. The failure of Ferrara was repeated. His preaching was not relished by the pleasure-loving Florentines. He failed to prophesy smooth things. He did not entertain his hearers with sallies of wit, but was intensely solemn. He seemed to possess much of the spirit of Dante, who walked the streets of Florence with the reflection of eternity on his face, suggesting the remark which the children made as he passed by, "There is a man who has been in hell." Savonarola was startled by the wickedness of the city, alarmed in view of the fearful consequences of sin and oppressed with a sense of personal responsibility. He cried aloud and spared not. He showed the people their sins, and besought them to flee from the wrath to come. It was not long until San Lorenzo was wellnigh deserted. Meanwhile the church of San Spirito was crowded. Fra Mariano was an orator, a rhetorician, a time-server, who sought personal popularity as the supreme good, and cared not if dead souls were the stepping-stones of his ascent. He entertained the people with flights of

imagination, with gorgeous word-pictures, with lying flatteries. The sermon was a beautiful mosaic on which no shadow rested. The world heard no rebuke, no voice of warning, no summons to a pure and heavenly life. The people applauded Fra Mariano; they despised the preacher of San Lorenzo. Savonarola was dejected by his want of success, and yet a great hope sustained him: Florence will hear him on some other day.

He was sent from the gay capital to a church in San Gemigniaro, was removed thence to Brescia, and at last was established in the Dominican chapter of Reggio. In these retired regions his latent powers were rapidly developed. The people hung on his lips, melted into tears, cried aloud for mercy. Hell yawned at their feet, heaven opened wide its gates. The cross, double-armed, told of danger and pointed to a secure, eternal Refuge. His voice was at times as the roar of an avalanche and solemn as eternity; again, it was plaintive as the sighing of the pines on the mountain-slopes. He dared to do his duty. He drew the curtains which had concealed the chambers of imagery in the hearts from which God had departed. He seemed endowed with omniscience and discovered the very thoughts of sin. He smote the thrones of iniquity as with the hand of omnipotence. He was a Jonah crying on the highways and byways of sin, portending the speedy ruin of the cities of Italy, depraved as Sodom and Gomorrah, if they failed to repent.

At the services in the Dominican chapter of Reggio was seen a man whose repute as a scholar was famous. His genius was exceptional. The mountaineers could

not invent terms to set forth their reverence for the stranger whom Florence rejected ; but in that crowded chapter there was none more deeply moved than Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. There came to him impressions of God and eternity wholly unknown before. They came to stay. He pronounced Savonarola the greatest orator known to the age. He may have discovered defects in the monk's logic, want of finish in his style and blemishes in his oratory. But his earnestness atoned for all that. He evidently preached the truth, believed the truth, lived under the power of the truth. He did not seek the world's favor, but its salvation. He longed to lift men out of sin up to holiness and into fellowship with God. Admiring his integrity of life and purity of motive, Pico of Mirandola expressed his estimate of the Dominican preacher to Lorenzo de Medici, and the latter solicited Savonarola's return to Florence. After some delay, continuing an unfinished work in Reggio and making a desired visit to Genoa, the invitation was accepted, and the mountain-preacher who had moved his auditors as the winds moved the surrounding forests resumed his ministrations in the gay capital of Tuscany. All that had gone before was largely a preparation for the great work of his life, the fruitage of which shall last for ever.

At this point it may be well to notice some of the prominent features of that age. It was the period of the Renaissance. Science, literature, painting and sculpture had received a sudden impulse and went onward by rapid strides. The art of printing with movable types had just been discovered. Instead of manuscripts few in number, the most of them hidden away in monaster-

ies, where learning was largely confined, came the printed page. Books were rapidly multiplied and widely distributed. Though costly and beyond the reach of the humbler classes, yet they became accessible to many who were unable to purchase them. The noted Mazarine Bible had issued from the press of Guttenberg at Mentz. After the capture of Mentz by Adolphus the men who had been associated with Guttenberg, Faust and Schöffer were scattered abroad, as were the early disciples by the persecutions which arose in Jerusalem. Printing-presses were soon in use at Subiaco, Milan and Venice. Some of the old classics were thus reproduced at Rome and elsewhere, and other works were issued. Although the revival of learning did not originate with the art of printing, yet it was greatly advanced by it. Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio and Villani had stirred the world of thought in the preceding century, and other lights had shone amid the ignorance of what we designate as the Mediæval Age. It is difficult to indicate the beginning of the Renaissance, but the middle of the fifteenth century forms an approximate date. In Italy the revival of learning was aided by eminent scholars who had come hither from the East after the capture of Constantinople by Mohammed II. Princes like Lorenzo de Medici, himself no mean poet, nourished the spirit of the age. Politian owed much to the fostering sympathy of the autocrat of Florence. The names of Ariosto, who wrote the *Orlando Furioso*, of Boiardo, Macchiavelli, Aretino, Rucellai, Sperone and others who excelled in tragic poetry and comedy, continue to the present.

At the same time, the fine arts were urged on to greater



perfection. Leonardo da Vinci was painting his *Cenacola*, or Last Supper, in the church of Santo Maria delle Grazie at Milan; Alberti was planning the church of San Francisco at Rimini; and Ghiberti had just completed the bronze doors of the Baptistery in Florence; and meanwhile the sailor of Genoa was crossing the Atlantic to discover a new world when in quest of a passage to India. This was the age in which Savonarola lived, and the Renaissance was in its glory when he returned to Florence at the call of Lorenzo.

It was also an age of great moral corruption. It declared the impotency of classical learning and fine arts and speculative philosophy to cure spiritual disorders and restore to man the image lost in the fall. Degeneracy in morals seems to have increased as the Renaissance advanced. The religious sentiment which inspired Raphael, Leonardo and Michael Angelo was largely absent in the latter half of the fifteenth century. Science and art were exalted above religion, and their decadence was an inevitable sequence. Mental culture must be planted in piety, or it will be meagre, unhealthful and marred. It has been remarked by John Ruskin that from the early period of the Renaissance until now "they have tried to produce Michael Angelos and Leonardos by teaching the barren sciences, and still mourned and marveled that no Michael Angelos came, not perceiving that these great fathers were only able to secure such nourishment because they were rooted on the Rock of all ages, and that our scientific teaching now-a-days is nothing more or less than the assiduous watering of trees whose stems are cut through."

At the time when Savonarola came conspicuously to

view that faith in God which develops both the mental and spiritual faculties was quite unknown, and whilst learning dropped from its former eminence, yet retained much of its former glory, the corruption in morals made alarming progress. Wickedness occupied high places and dominated all classes. The teachers of religion were the slaves of sin. Rioting, drunkenness, licentiousness and every form of vice prevailed. God was dethroned from human regard, and the trail of the serpent was over all. Even Pope Innocent VIII., who had winked at iniquity, was alarmed by its progress and repeated the edict of Pius II., which forbade "priests to keep taverns, playhouses or brothels, or to act as paid agents of courtesans."

Such was the condition of Italy when Fra Girolamo returned to Florence. What could this lone monk accomplish in the wicked capital? Who would listen to him who had before been tried and found wanting? The memory of San Lorenzo and the preacher's failure was fresh in the minds of many. Girolamo appears to have shrunk from public notice and resumed his work in the seclusion of San Marco. At first he was occupied with the instruction of monks. When the class-room became inadequate for his purpose, he lectured in the convent-garden. His power was a marvel to the Dominicans. Surely he must have a larger sphere in which to exercise his exceptional gifts. Though Florence had once rejected him, Florence will hear him now. A voice from Heaven seemed to call the preacher to wider audience. Still, he advanced by gradual steps. It was announced that he would preach in the convent-chapel, and when the appointed day arrived the place was crowded. Many



were anxious to hear the man who had developed a weird resistless power in the mountain villages and commanded the attention of the great. His next appearance was in the great Florentine cathedral, the rival of St. Peter's at Rome. Mercurial Florence was represented by a multitude seldom equaled in that spacious temple. The pleasure-loving people of the metropolis were as profoundly stirred as were the mountaineers who flocked about his pulpit in Reggio. His eloquence fascinated them; his audacity startled them; his solemnity of speech awed them into silence. At times the vast assembly was moved to tears, and occasional sobs deepened the general impression. There was an indefinable power in the monk's oratory and a singular grandeur in his heroism. There he stands in the high pulpit, the very impersonation of truth, firm as a rock, fearless as the Tishbite prophet, affectionate as the beloved John. His high forehead bears the marks of anxious thought. His deep-blue eyes pierce with a searching scrutiny or melt in faithful love. All his features are strongly marked. His is a Dantean face which once seen can never be forgotten. His manner is distinguished by intense earnestness rather than grace, and his speech by spiritual force than by the finish of studied rhetoric. It suggested the arrow once found on a battle-field of the Orient bearing the inscription, "For Philip's eye." His mission was to rebuke sin without respect of persons, to declare the awful holiness of God, to announce the doom of the finally impenitent, and by every motive he could discover to win men, if possible, to a life of holiness. His generation revered him, but never learned the full measure of his power. He was one of the Alpine men of

this later dispensation whose name, for a little obscured, shall live for ever.

The fame of Savonarola went abroad. Strangers in Florence hastened to the cathedral to hear him. They carried his messages to their homes, and so extended the reach of his influence on both sides the Apennines. As a rule, people are not attracted to preachers who say much about sin and with a Damascus blade smite down self-sufficiency. They prefer those who exalt humanity, make their hearers think well of themselves, and hang out brilliant but false lights along the circumference of absolute need, and build for immortal souls airy castles that shall disappear before the storm of holy retribution. Yet human consciousness approves the faithful preacher. The soul was made for truth, and the great fact of sin is admitted, though salvation be unsought. Every man carries within him a reminiscence of departed glory and a premonition of doom. In his thoughtful moods a conscious sinner commends the preacher who declares the truth in love, and speaks as from the battlements of the invisible world. There was a reason, grounded in man's religious nature, for the popularity of Girolamo, and the church of San Spirito emptied its throng into the greater Duomo.

When Lorenzo was dying, although the monk who had been made the prior of San Marco had not accorded to the prince the reverence which he felt was his due, and had by his loud denunciation of sin disturbed his complacency, yet he selected this modern Elijah to be his spiritual adviser, saying, "Send for the prior of San Marco: he is the only true monk I know." At the deathbed of the prince Girolamo furnished an additional

example of his unswerving adherence to duty. There appeared an undue severity in his treatment of the expiring ruler, a man who combined in his character elements of good and evil, a despot whose power was often wisely and beneficently exercised. But whilst the prior was ready to recognize whatever was good in the private and public life of the prince, yet he was acquainted with his vices, and was persuaded that his example and rule had extended the compass and power of sin in the city and nominal republic of Florence. Lorenzo made confession of his sins. He admitted his grave offending in the sacking of the town of Volterra, in diverting the dowries of orphan girls in Florence to the prosecution of war with Volterra, and the cruel indiscriminate massacre which succeeded the Pazzi conspiracy. The prior was asked to grant absolution. He consented to do it on these conditions: First of all, Lorenzo must confess faith in God, merciful as he is holy; this the prince was prompt to do. Then he must make restitution to those he had defrauded; this he was willing to do. Further, he must restore liberty to Florence. To the last condition of priestly absolution Lorenzo refused assent. The ambition of his life had been to establish the power of the Medici in Florence. He held the sceptre in his dying clasp, ready to transfer it to his son. Shall it be shivered into fragments at the feet of this Dominican confessor? Shall he undo in a moment the result to the accomplishment of which he had devoted all his years? That cannot be. He heard the hollow tread of death sounding through the thin veil which divided eternity from time, but, flashing his indignation upon the immovable monk, he turned his face to the wall and

died. Savonarola left the gilded death-chamber in the palace of Careggi, persuaded that he should not have required more of the dying prince and could not have demanded less.

Thereafter Girolamo was brought into more immediate relations with the civil life of his people. Piero de Medici succeeded his father. The sadness which had succeeded the news of Lorenzo's death, and the apprehension of evil which gathered like a pall of darkness around the capital, melted away as the morning mist with the auspicious beginning of Piero's rule. His personal presence commanded admiration. He had not the scholarly attainments of his father, but his gifts and acquirements made him illustrious. His disposition was supposed to be generous, conciliatory and adapted to the exigencies of the times. But Florence soon discovered her mistake. The forebodings which followed Lorenzo's death returned. A darker period awaits the capital and state of Tuscany. Perchance a morning lies beyond the night.

Meanwhile, Fra Girolamo continued his ministry in the church of Santa Maria del Fiore. His power was still in the ascendant. He was a greater than Piero. In some way he may bring better days to Florence. It was a conjecture only. Then, whilst the weak, sensual, selfish prince was seeking his own pleasure and binding the fetters of despotism on the people, the prior of San Marco had a vision similar to, and yet quite unlike, that of Constantine the Great. It was not a cross suspended in the heavens, but a sword with flashing blade pointing downward. On it he read a prophecy of benediction and of doom. Judgment was at hand and mercy

was near !—*Gladius Domini super terram cito et velociter* (the sword of the Lord upon the earth shortly and swiftly). It was not the monk's first vision. There had been others, and they had not misled him. They may have been born of a fevered imagination, or the day-thought may have turned to a dream by night. To him it was intensely real. These manifestations of the unseen, God coming out of the secrecy of his mysterious being and communing with the Dominican, had much to do with the spirit and life of this son of the cloister. He believed God was speaking to him and intended to perform mighty works by him. This conviction fired his soul with a self-consuming zeal, imparted a burning eloquence to his speech, and clothed with moral courage, never surpassed since apostolic days, this chosen servant of mighty reforms. This furnishes, however, only a partial interpretation of Savonarola's life. It had far deeper roots and more spiritual visions. Like John Bunyan, who heard voices from heaven speaking to him on the Elstow Common, so this preacher of an earlier age drew from the fullness of Christ and was baptized with the power of the Holy Ghost. There was no stain on his character, no deception in his life, no swerving from high and holy purposes when princes threatened and popes pronounced him accursed.

In the pulpit of Santa Maria the preacher told his vision. "The sword of the Lord" seemed to hang over Florence. The people trembled with fear, then cherished a newborn hope. The liberty they craved might come, but at what cost they could not foretell.

The days went on. The king of France, as a descendant of the house of Anjou, had claimed the throne

of Naples. Whilst Girolamo was predicting judgments from heaven, Charles VIII. was moving his armies eastward. The preacher found an interpretation of his vision. Charles VIII. bore the sword of the Lord. If Florence will receive him he will dethrone the house of Medici. Thus liberty may be restored. Piero thought to avert such a termination of his power by surrendering to the French, as a peace-offering, five of the fortresses of Tuscany. The indignation of the people knew no bounds. Piero was driven from his palace, and as he fled through the city-gate the people hooted and hissed the departing prince, and would have slain him ere that had not Savonarola bade them leave the sword in God's hands. Thus ended the despotism of Piero de Medici. It had continued two years only. Lorenzo when dying refused liberty to Florence and thought to establish his power for ever. The work of his life suffered defeat in the flight of his son. What now? Despotism is broken. Nepotism is dead. Reconstruction is required. The sword of the Lord had not shed even a drop of blood. Savonarola would establish by peaceful means a better reign. To a monarchy none would consent. For a democracy the people were unprepared. An intermediate government might be established embracing democratic principles, recognizing the people as the source of power, with the right to choose their rulers, yet limiting the privilege of suffrage to those who might use it intelligently and wisely. Despotism on the one side and anarchy on the other were to be avoided. The ship of state is summoned to the passage between Scylla and Charybdis. Savonarola must take the helm. Then the Dominican monk directed public sentiment, indicated



a form of government and suggested a code of laws. He did all this from the pulpit. He left the people assembled in general council to deliberate, formulate and act. He was not personally present at the Piazza nor at the sessions of the Signoria. But whatever he proposed they did. The result was a republic closely resembling that of Venice. Two councils were formed to which all legislative power was committed. The great council comprised three thousand citizens. The choice of these was restricted to those who had been magistrates or were the sons of magistrates—men of mature years, intelligence and influence. The higher council was composed of eighty citizens of still larger experience, with more extended powers, to which all magistrates were amenable and by which all laws were submitted for confirmation or rejection. In addition to these councils existed the Seigniory endorsed with executive power. This form of government recommended by Savonarola resembles the limited monarchy of England, whilst it approximates to that of the United States, embracing less of the democratic conception, and guards against the evils which would have resulted from universal suffrage—an extension of privilege which is liable to great abuse in any age and imperils any nation in which it obtains.

Savonarola also suggested a modification of the system of taxation then in vogue, which was specially unjust to some and militated against the interests of all. His suggestion was adopted under the new régime, and, notwithstanding all the civil fluctuations of Florence during the four centuries succeeding, the system of taxation proposed by the friar has continued until the present.

In addition to this change, he advised the establishment of a court of appeal which might protect persons charged with gross offences from the injustice of the existing court of eight persons, the decisions of which were often hastily made, often cruel and in all instances final. The people gave their immediate approval. He also advised a general amnesty for political offenders, the establishment of a banking system that would guard the poor from the oppressions of usury, and other measures in the interests of public morality. These suggestions were promptly adopted. The prior of San Marco was the statesman of Florence, and his wisdom, so much in advance of his age, and his influence upon the civil appointments of that critical juncture, though the results were evanescent, have made him the admiration of the civilized world in the more advanced stages of its progress. Villari has well said of Savonarola that "he became the very soul of the whole people, and the chief author of the laws on which the new government was constituted. When we enter the halls of the councils we hear the citizens supporting his sentiments and discussing them in his language. The form of government then established was the best, the only secure one, that the people had been able to devise during so many years of tumultuary existence. The greatest Florentine political historians, after having submitted it to a close examination, could not refrain from bestowing upon it their highest commendation."

This record of history is not to be construed as an approval of the secularizing of the clergy. The spirituality of the Church is an accepted principle. Civil legislation belongs to the state. No ecclesiastical hierar-



chy is entitled to the control of the political life. Temporal power will invariably destroy spiritual power. The Christian ministry is devoted to a kingdom which is not of this world. But the exigencies of the times and the existing relations of the Church to the State furnish an apology, if any be needed, for Savonarola's indirect yet controlling relation to the political life at that particular juncture. It should also be borne in mind that whilst his public teachings had reference to certain political interests, he insisted most strenuously and always upon the "fear of God and the reformation of manners" as essential to the welfare of the State. At the same time, he believed the government of the Medici favored corruption of morals, and he would at least greatly modify this result by removing its cause.

The new republic soon passed away. Its principles were the suggestions of exceptional wisdom. But a republic cannot last in the absence of reverence for God and submission to his will. The highest form of civil liberty worships at the altars of Jehovah. It reveres God's house, God's day and that divine revelation which furnishes an infallible code of morals.

As related to the State, the work of Fra Girolamo was a failure. Yet the statement requires qualification. Immediately it was so; remotely it was not. Its influence lived in other ages, was felt in other lands and will last as long as the world.

But it is with his labors as a moral reformer that we are most concerned. A great change was wrought in Florence and in Italy through his labors. It extended to all classes. He began with the convent of San Marco, and by means of the cathedral pulpit extended his influence

through wider spheres. Monastic life had departed from its original simplicity. The vow of poverty had lost its meaning. The prohibition of the devout Antonio which excluded wealth and effeminacy from San Marco had become a dead letter. Possessions had been accumulated; the convent-walls were richly ornamented; the tables were laden with luxuries; self-indulgence displaced devotion, and the semblance of piety had wellnigh departed. Savonarola insisted on the most radical reform, and secured it. The accumulated wealth was devoted to objects consistent with the purposes of the order. Habits of self-denial were restored. Appetites were curbed. Plainness in dress was required. Useful labor furnished means of subsistence. Time was given to intellectual culture, to the study of the Scriptures, to devout meditation and stated acts of worship. The prior did not accomplish all he desired. Outward reform did not ensure a corresponding spiritual change. But there was evidence of awakened piety, and many of the monks of San Marco were soon distinguished for consecration to the true intent of monastic life as interpreted by Antonio and reaffirmed by Girolamo. The influence of the Florentine convent reached to other convents, and these centres of religious power made themselves felt in the contiguous population. Meanwhile, the prior of San Marco came into direct contact with the people of the capital city which influenced Tuscany and regions beyond. The cathedral continued to be crowded from pulpit to doors. To many entrance was impossible. The preacher did not urge monasticism as the cure of sin—did not substitute the form of godliness for its power. He declared the presence of indwelling depravity which

found its fruitage in external sins, and the necessity of a change of heart in order to a reformation of life. His denunciation of prevailing vices was terrible. His announcement of coming judgment was fearful. Mirandola described the physical effect as unparalleled in the history of the mediæval pulpit. He represented many of Savonarola's hearers when he said the voice of thunder brought a shudder to his bones and the hairs of his head stood on end. The call to repentance was as the call of God from a flashing throne wrapped in blackness. But Mercy stood beside Justice. Her hand was on his. Judgment was delayed "*yet forty days.*" The people trembled, wept, prayed. They gave up their sins. Drunkenness ceased. Revelry came to an end. The regalia of folly and sensual pleasures were burned on the public streets. Men who had defrauded their fellows made restitution. The thoughtless grew thoughtful. The churches of Florence were filled. A new order of things displaced the old. The people pronounced Savonarola the savior of Florence. Italy felt the shock of his awful eloquence. The papal throne trembled, and well it might, for the worst member of the house of Borgia wore the tiara. The Dominican monk knew not the fear of man. Popes and potentates were as severely rebuked as the servant of the cloister—the great who rolled in wealth as the peasant who spoiled his neighbor's field. Every form of sin, whether practiced in high places or low, by patricians or plebeians, was pierced with a flaming lance that went straight to its mark. But if he was stern and awful as the prophet who met Ahab in Naboth's vineyard and condemned the priests of Baal on Carmel, yet guilt and judgment were

not his only theme. He also announced the mercy of God in Jesus Christ. There was a way to heaven even from the gates of hell. It ran by the cross. He besought the people to receive the faith apostles preached and the Christ in whom Polycarp and Augustine believed. He confessed himself a sinner saved by grace. His faith looked back to Calvary and up to the throne of the Lamb of God. His voice mellowed in tenderness as he spoke of Him who saves, and said for himself, "I have grievously sinned, and thou, Jesu, wert the sufferer. I have been thine enemy, and thou, Jesu, for my sake, wast nailed to the cross."

And here we find the secret of his power. He preached sin, and salvation from it, in dependence upon the Holy Ghost, with an earnestness that burned its way to the hearts of men. He was not such an orator as the silver-tongued Chrysostom; he had not the grace of Pascal, the eloquence of Fénelon, the pathos of Whitefield. Yet he was one of the mightiest of preachers. He made it evident that he was moved by love to souls—such love as his hearers had never known before. He sought the good of Florence, and to have secured it as a lasting heritage he was ready to die. His was the spirit of a late Italian, but of higher birth and moved by grander motives, which prompted that immortal utterance, "If fifty Garibaldis are imprisoned, let Rome be free." Martin Luther knew more of truth, but he was not a greater hero when he stood unmoved in the Diet of Worms, calm as Daniel in the den when he looked on hungry lions and hungry lions looked on him.

But there was a determination on the part of many to

break Savonarola's power. The friends of the Medici were his sworn enemies. Piero was in Rome. Mirano of San Spirito, inflamed with jealousy, was in Rome. Alexander VI., a pope whom a papal historian has described as one of the greatest and most horrible monsters in nature, was determined to crush the audacious monk. He welcomed Piero de Medici and Mirano as aids in his murderous purpose. But the people had pronounced Girolamo a prophet, and Alexander was not fully assured of their support. If he could by other means stop the mouth of this intrepid preacher or win him back to former allegiance, he would prefer a less hazardous course. Thereupon he invited Savonarola to Rome and proffered him a cardinal's hat. The monk indignantly refused the bribe and expressed his preference for the red hat of martyrdom. When prohibited from preaching he remained silent for half a year, then resumed his ministry at the request of the Signoria.

But it then appeared that the popular sentiment was not with him, and his enemies took advantage of the reaction. How shall his influence in the interests of his generation be regained? or how the power of evil subdued? Savonarola could hope for nothing from the pope. He accounted Alexander VI. the son of perdition. Although still clinging to the papacy as a divine ordination, he would not recognize this scion of the Borgias as the vicar of Christ, the visible head of the holy Catholic Church. He distinguished the man from the office. Alexander was not pope. God had rejected him. As a man he was vile, contemptible and without power. His interdict was not the interdict of Jesus Christ; the hand was Joab's. Persuaded of this, Savonarola appealed to

the leading powers of Europe. He wrote letters to Charles VIII., to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, to Maximilian of Germany and to Henry VII. of England, in which he set forth the corruptions of the Church, and referred them largely to the influence of Alexander, who had secured his position by fraud, had given the might of his influence to wickedness, had yielded himself to the power of unbelief, and should be displaced from the papal throne he had dishonored. He insisted on a general council to depose him and choose a successor, and cited precedents for so summary a course. The appeal was made in vain. Savonarola's influence continued to wane. His faithfulness as a preacher of repentance had provoked opposition in Florence, and many who had withered under his rebukes, biding their time, appeared on the open arena as his sworn enemies intent on his destruction. They joined hands with Piero and Alexander, and resorted to an expedient by means of which they advanced their purpose. The ordeal of fire—a passage between walls of flame, supposed by the superstitious Florentines to determine questions of character and soundness of faith—was duly announced, and crowds gathered in the public square to witness the scene. The ordeal did not occur, as the conditions on which Savonarola consented to the test were not granted. The indignation of the disappointed populace was aroused, and the people turned against their prophet. It was a repetition of what had occurred at Lystra when the people stoned the man whom they had pronounced a god.

It was a great sorrow to Savonarola. His life-work seemed undone. The partisans of the Medici, who had



trampled on popular freedom, were again in power. The moral reform had come to an end. It was a meteor which had left a fading trail behind it, and would serve only to make the darkness the more apparent. So it seemed.

The day following the proposed ordeal of fire an assault was made on San Marco. Francesco Valori was slain. Girolamo expected to meet a similar fate. He gathered the Dominican brothers in the convent-library and calmly addressed them. There was great pathos in his words. He affirmed his faith in God and in the truth he had preached, then added, in tones of moving tenderness: "I did not know that all the city was so soon to turn against me; but the will of the Lord be done. This is my last counsel: let faith, patience and prayer be your armor. I leave you in anguish to give me to mine enemies."

San Marco could not resist the powerful assault, and nothing was left but to submit to the foe. The Signoria commanded the seizure of Fra Girolamo, Fra Dominico and Fra Salvæstro. The first two were immediately imprisoned. Fra Salvæstro surrendered on the day following.

Then came the mock trial, and it was long protracted. An attempt was made to secure a recantation, but Girolamo submitted to brutal tortures rather than throw the slightest shadow on his integrity of purpose and devotion to truth. It was claimed that he did invalidate his former testimony by humble confession of error. The proof of this is wanting. His enemies were the only witnesses to the confession. When torture had failed to extort self-crimination in reply to questions addressed to

him, Ceccone, a notary, said, "We will make answers for him." This Ceccone doubtless did.

The weeks passed on. Girolamo rested on God. He pleaded anew the cleansing blood of Christ: "O Lord, a thousand times hast thou wiped out my iniquity. I do not rely on my own justification, but on thy mercy." Thus he asserted that doctrine which Martin Luther restored to the Church—justification by faith. He had maintained a life of singular integrity; he had worn the mantle of the holy Antonio. His enemies might pronounce him heretical, but they could not deny his sanctity. Yet his trust was not there, but in the mercy of God exercised through Jesus Christ.

The trial was resumed, but no charge against him could be established. What should be done? There was one in that Florentine Sanhedrin who would not consent to his death. The rest were determined on his execution, and to Agnolis Pandolfini they replied, "A dead enemy fights no more." The Signoria pronounced his sentence—death. The three prisoners met, looked sadly into each other's faces, said but little. Fra Girolamo advised quietness and trust in God. He would have no public protestations of innocence; they would only give occasion to their enemies to mock. It were better to go to their death as did their Lord, opening not their mouths. He breathed forth his love to his brethren in calm and tender tones, and they knelt at the prior's feet whilst he pronounced his final benediction. Then each repaired to his own cell.

Again the prisoners met. It was in the morning of the day appointed for their execution. They united in the communion of the Lord's Supper, and as their



thoughts were occupied with the Man of Sorrows who instituted the Supper the same night on which he was betrayed, their souls grew strong and they welcomed the death that should open to them the portals of heaven. Then Savonarola offered a prayer in which his fellow-prisoners joined: "I know, my Lord, that thou art Trinity, perfect and invisible, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. I know that thou art the eternal Word, that thou didst descend into the bosom of the Virgin Mary, and didst ascend the cross to shed thy most precious blood for the remission of my sins. For all the sins I have done I ask thy pardon—pardon too for everything I may have done injurious to this city and for every unconscious error I may have committed. Amen and Amen." The prayers of Savonarola were ended. All were calm. For themselves the martyrs had no occasion to weep. For Florence and Italy, for the Church of which Christ is the true Bishop, and for the slain of the daughters of Jerusalem they grieved, but from their cells they saw the faint dawning of a better day.

They passed from the prison in the Palazzo Vecchio to the Piazza, where their ecclesiastical garments were removed, the bishop of Vasona saying to Savonarola, "I cut thee off from the Church militant and triumphant;" to which the latter replied, "Militant, not triumphant—that lies beyond your power." Then they were delivered to the secular power, and the sentence of death was read, after which they took their places on a rude scaffold around which were the fagots prepared for the burning. Fra Salvæstro was selected as the first to die, and as the rope was about to be adjusted to his neck

he said, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." Fra Dominico seemed even joyful as he yielded himself to his executioner. Then came Savonarola. The great Piazza, crowded with dignitaries of the city—the oligarchical Arrabiati and the republican Piagnoni were there, and criminals who had, Barabbas-like, been liberated for the occasion, led the motley crowd in their jeers and cruel mocking. When the prior of San Marco stepped to his place the Piazza was hushed in oppressive silence. Strong men shuddered. Eternity was there. Then a voice broke the stillness: "Prophet, now is the time for a miracle." Perhaps it brought to Savonarola's mind the cry addressed to his Lord: "If thou be the Christ, come down from the cross." He made no reply. The hangman did his part, and on the 23d of May, 1498, in the forty-fifth year of his age, that noblest of men—whom princes honored and peasants revered and children loved, of whom Florence was not worthy, the leading statesman, the purest monk, the foremost preacher of the mediæval ages, who did his duty in the fear of God and triumphed over death through the cross of Christ—suffered for righteousness' sake and went to his everlasting reward. After the hanging came the burning. The flames leaped into the air and the smoke hung its pall over the Piazza. At night the ashes were gathered and cast into the Arno.

Savonarola, though charged with heresy, did not die as a heretic. He had not called in question a single essential dogma of the Church of Rome. He died because he rebuked sin. The mother of Herodias had again appeared and demanded the head of John the Baptist, thinking to cover guilt by destroying the accuser.

Only a few years had passed when Rome reversed her decision concerning the martyred prior and assigned him a place among her saints. Raphael hung his portrait in the Vatican. Michael Angelo, with Mirandola, mourned the death of his beloved Girolamo. Even Florence for three centuries scattered May flowers over the spot where he died, and Donatello's statue of the great preacher still looks silently down on the Palace square. Romanists pay homage to the man who towered among men and gathered the aureole of his fame around the head of the holy Catholic Church. Protestants claim him as one of the Reformers who prepared the way for Luther's coming. Rudelbach and Meier find in his teachings the salient elements of the Reformation. Martin Luther began where Fra Girolamo began, with the corruptness of the Church. He went further, and discovered the sources of iniquity in the Romish system. He sought to remove the symptoms by curing the disease. Yet had there been no Savonarola there might have been no Luther. One thing is certain: the Florentine Reformer has lived in every succeeding age. His influence is still felt in Tuscany, Europe, the world. The first Parliament of liberated Italy, Pio Nono a prisoner at Rome, was opened in the Consiglio Maggiore, where Savonarola's great council met when Piero de Medici the autocrat had fled from Florence. The monk of San Marco still declares the awful guilt of sin, salvation through the cross and the value of personal holiness which reflects the beauty of the now glorified Christ. Villari recorded only a partial truth when he said of Savonarola: "He was the first in the fifteenth century to make men feel that a new light had awakened the

human race ; and thus he was a prophet of a new civilization, the forerunner of Luther, of Bacon, of Descartes. Hence the drama of his life became, after his death, the drama of Europe. In the course of a single generation after Luther had declared his mission the spirit of the Church of Rome underwent a change. From the halls of the Vatican to the secluded hermitage of the Apennines this revival was felt. Instead of a Borgia there reigned a Caraffa."

JOHN HUSS: EARLIER LIFE AND WORK.

*“ The son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped ; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”*

2 THESS. 2 : 3, 4.

*“ God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in any thing contrary to his word, or beside it in matters of faith or worship. So that to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commandments out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience ; and the requiring an implicit faith, and an absolute obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also.”*

CON. FAITH, CHAP. XX. SEC. II.

## JOHN HUSS: EARLIER LIFE AND WORK.

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BOHEMIA is one of the most interesting countries in Europe. Now a part of the Austrian empire, it was once an independent kingdom, the home of the Celtic Boii, whence it derives its name. It is surrounded by great mountain-ranges which stand as if to guard it from foreign invasion. It is watered by the Elbe and Moldau, rivers of great beauty, which wind their way through mountain-gorges and bathe the feet of long lines of hills. Rich in its soil, genial in its climate and abounding in scenery both picturesque and grand, Bohemia has also much historic interest which may well engage attention. It has been a great battlefield on which truth has contended with error and righteousness with sin, the conflict sanguinary and protracted. Now the smoke of contest is departed, and in this peaceful age we may survey the past, wandering through the labyrinths of its changeful history, listening to the voices of its strife blending with the shouts of victors, and catching the breath of its piety which struggles through the moral miasma.

We are especially interested in the religious history of Bohemia. The morning star of the great Reformation which shed its prophetic light on the British isles shone on the mountains of Southern Germany, and was

reflected from the bosom of the Moldau. The dawn was approaching, and men of God, standing in anxious expectation, caught, as they sometimes believed, the sheen of the glorious sun breaking through the clouds.

The continental Church at the close of the fourteenth century was no longer the Church of the apostles, of Polycarp and Augustine. Its glory had departed, its strength had turned to weakness, its devotion to will-worship and its Christology to Mariolatry. Even God himself was rivaled, if not outranked, in human esteem by the Roman Pontiff. Some have believed that prophecy was fulfilled in the man who had put on the tiara and grasped the sceptre, and with unholy feet had climbed to the throne of temporal and spiritual empire, opposing and exalting himself above all that was called God or that was worshiped; so that he as God sat in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God; and meanwhile evil men and seducers waxed worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

Charles IV. held his contested throne in the city divided by the Moldau. He boasted of the place of his royal residence that it was the most beautiful on which the sun shone, the home of art, the centre of all culture and the heart of Germany, whose pulsation was felt from the Adriatic to the Gulf of Finland, and from the Danube to the English Channel. The University of Prague was the foremost school in Europe, numbering not less than thirty thousand students, and attracting thither many of the leading scholars of the age. The Hradschin, or Palace Hill, crowned with cathedrals, stood out in bold relief against the background of the Laurenziberg Hills, once lurid with the fires of heathen



worship ; and the great Karlsbrucke, or Charles's Bridge, which is the wonder of our age, which was left for a succeeding generation to complete, one of the most imposing structures in Eastern Europe, joined the Hradschin to the Kleinsite, the old town to the new. As we look upon the great bridge with its massive arches, its memorials of historic characters which gaze down with stony eyes on the pageants of to-day, we are reminded of another passage by which the past of religious thought and life found its way out of the long night of superstition into the morning of the Reformation—a morning born amid the convulsions of kingdoms, and sadly obscured for a season as it rose on the heights of the Erzgebirge and Moravian mountains.

The time had come for great ideas to be born or to emerge from their sepulchres and travel abroad over a regenerated earth. The circle of the primitive Church was about to return upon itself, sweeping out of darkness into pristine light. The truth Paul preached was to be in the ascendant, the spiritual cross to extrude the idolatrous symbol, and the Christ of revelation to be a real person in a sense that Rome had forgotten to teach.

God accomplishes his purposes through human agencies. In an obscure village of Bohemia a son is born of humble parents who is to be a master in Israel. If he fail to be a Joshua leading God's chosen people to the land of promise, he shall be a Moses to weaken the power of a cruel hierarchy and inaugurate an exodus from the domination of a modern Pharaoh who know not Joseph.

John Huss was born July 6, 1369 (some authorities

say in 1373), at Hussinitz in a southern division of Bohemia. He derived his name from the place of his nativity. Of his parents but little is known. They were poor, but worthy. It is probable that they were more devout than many of their neighbors, and trained their child with a sedulous care which preserved him from the vices that were prevalent in that age. Children are usually the reflection of the home. So far as is known, no stain rested on the early years and no grave deflection marred the character of the youth whom God designed to honor.

We find him for a time in one of the monastic schools of Hussinitz, a boy of gentle manners and personal beauty, his large and thoughtful eyes even then seeming to catch a glimpse of his conspicuous future. He was an ambitious student. He longed to read the musty parchments, written in a strange tongue, which in his esteem constituted the chief wealth of the place; and the monks, who took a fancy to the boy, did what they could to furnish him the key to stores of knowledge of which they knew but little themselves. He needed advantages the monastery did not afford, and soon removed to a school of considerable importance a little more remote from his home. At Prachatiz he found what he craved, and the possibilities of advancement stimulated effort. He soon took high rank among his fellow-students, and in due time completed the prescribed curriculum with honor.

But he was not content with this. He resolved to drink deeply from the Pierian spring and to fit himself for distinguished services. The monks encouraged him to enter the university at Prague, and thither it was con-

cluded he should go. Accompanied by his mother, he went to the capital city, the far-famed seat of learning as of imperial power. The great town, so unlike the simple village from which he came, with its palaces, cathedrals, schools and mighty priesthood, together with its environment of natural beauty which betokened the special favor of Heaven, made a profound impression on the young student. But the university, with its vast proportions, numerous appointments and great libraries, was the object of his chief admiration. One of the professors received Huss to his own home and arranged for his support. His progress in study fulfilled the hopes of the partial monks of Prachatiz. With natural gifts of a high order Huss combined a patient endurance which conquered difficulties that discouraged the less resolute. He was thorough in whatever he undertook, and he undertook whatever promised advantage. Whilst many were content with superficial advantages, he went to the roots of things where ignorance and knowledge part company. At the same time he was not an unsympathetic recluse, wrapped in selfishness and governed by a wholly unsanctified ambition. His moral qualities were as admirable as his intellectual, even his enemies being judges. "His affability of manner, his life of austerity and self-denial, against which none could bring a charge, his features pale and melancholy, his body enfeebled, and his gentleness toward all, even of the humblest class, were more effective than any power of words."

The highest academic honors were conferred on Huss. Soon after graduation he was made dean of the theological faculty, and a year later was appointed rector of

the university. As a preacher in the Bethlehem church, a spacious and elegant structure in the centre of one of the city squares, founded by John of Mul, he attracted not a little attention from the first. His intellectual power was recognized by all who heard him. He soon appeared in the *rôle* of a reformer—not in the sense of the century following, when multitudes separated themselves from a corrupt Church, but as a faithful preacher of righteousness urging people to leave off their sins and seek after holiness. He performed his office without fear or favor, and could “neither be frightened nor flattered.” Nobles applauded him. Distinguished scholars sat at his feet. The common people heard him gladly. His fame spread abroad, alike familiar to members of the royal court and the peasants on the mountain-slopes. Even then there were many who realized the need of reform, but they continued loyal to Rome. The work of renovation was to be done in the Church, and papal power, supposed to come from God, was to be perpetuated until the end of time. Huss thought of nothing else when he thundered from the pulpit of the Bethlehem chapel, and may have dreamed of nothing else when, a martyr to the truth, he was bound to the stake. But his faithful revelation and fearless denunciation of wickedness in high places soon arrayed against himself the power of the dominant priesthood, and Rome lifted its iron heel determined to crush the dangerous foe. The doom that awaits the friar of Florence shall be the doom of the preacher of Prague, and Huss and Savonarola shall bear each other company in the Tartarus prepared for heretics. Rome will consent to sin in its clergy, and there is scarce any depth of depravity to

which its clemency will not follow those who are loyal to its boastful assumptions, but will not tolerate the man who would destroy the foundations of its power. Yet if Huss had contented himself with denouncing the irregularities of the people and instituting a moral reform which should have swept the whole field of common life, even a corrupt hierarchy might have given assent. All *that* would have contributed to the papal exchequer by diminishing expenditures upon vice, and so have added to the power and luxury of the hierarchy. But the influence of Wyclif had crossed the Channel. His vigorous tractates and a number of his sermons had come into the possession of Huss. At first the Bohemian was unwilling to accept the teachings of the English Reformer; then received some of them tentatively, and at last adopted them in the main. He was in full accord with Wyclif's philosophical realism and predestination, but he held the doctrine of transubstantiation until the last. It was quite evident that Huss was departing from the conservatism which characterized his early ministry. There were lines of philosophical and devotional thought creeping out of the past, assuming more definite form, receiving new illumination from current events, and converging in the convictions and teaching of the eloquent preacher of the Bethlehem church. Rome looked with grave apprehensions of harm upon a man whose power was felt far beyond the walls of Prague and dared assault the Holy See itself. He was gathering around him, in full sympathy with his resistance of corruption in doctrine and morals, some of the most influential priests of Bohemia; and in all this there was much that portended evil to the Church.

Even rude art was summoned to the aid of reform.\* Two Englishmen, James and Conrad of Canterbury, who were in sympathy with Wyclifism, had come to Prague to avail themselves of advantages furnished by the university. They had visited the Bethlehem church, and were delighted with the brave utterances of the preacher. He had not gotten so far on in his search after truth as the English Reformer, but his progress was leading that way. They thought to put into a concrete form some of the principles he maintained. They would thereby give an expression to personal convictions which, for prudential considerations, they had withheld. They were admitted to the home of Luke Welensky, at a considerable remove from the Capitol Hill, and on the wall of one of the apartments of his house they placed a representation of Christ's triumphal entrance into Jerusalem. The lowly Galilean, humbly clad, bearing marks of exposure to the Syrian sun, rides an ass, advancing slowly down the slopes of Olivet. But the multitude are with Jesus. They strew the road with palm-leaves and olive-branches and shout their hosannas, whilst the disciples, unpretending fishermen, walk wonderingly after. There is a blending of majesty and humility in the scene. It is the majesty of royal power obscured by its humble surroundings. It is quite befitting the character of Him who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. It is a suggestion to the apostolic succession that humility becomes their office, for the disciple should not be above his Lord. The companion painting is a severe contrast. It represents a papal procession. It is a fête-day in Rome, and honor

\* According to some authorities.



is to be shown to the occupant of St. Peter's chair. The pope, gorgeously arrayed in silver and gold and wearing his pontifical crown, rides a richly-caparisoned horse, accompanied by soldiers who carry spears and halberds, whilst the great and small prostrate themselves before the Holy Father from whom obsequious emperors have received their crowns.

The painting was an effective preacher. Huss alluded to it in significant terms. Multitudes looked upon it, received its lessons, and turned from a mere man like themselves, whose blasphemous assumptions might well provoke the wrath of Heaven, to the unpretending Galilean, through whose veil of flesh shone the glory of Him who made and governs the world, God over all, blessed for evermore.

All ranks of the ecclesiastical order were severely censured for their vices and crimes. Italy joined hands with France in the condemnation of a corrupt priesthood, and the fulminations of a Zarabella and a Clemengis shook the foundations of hierarchical presumption and churchly power.

The pretended miracles which appealed to the superstitions of the people and fostered them detached the more thoughtful from a system which practiced the grossest deception in support of its treasury and made credulity a stepping-stone to power. One of these miracles may be instanced. The historian Neander records it. At Wilsnack a church had been demolished by a knight. A portion of a stone altar remained. In one of its cavities was found a wafer colored red. This singular appearance, the result of purely natural causes, was pronounced miraculous. The blood of Christ, pre-

served through thirteen centuries or transmitted from the glorified body in heaven, had baptized the Host as it reposed in the altar. The miracle was noised abroad. Scores of pilgrims were seen winding their way down the mountain-slopes. Men and women of strange speech, afflicted with incurable diseases, came from the far North that they might see and be healed. They came from Scandinavia, across the Baltic, from distant villages on the West and from the valleys of the Vaudois. Zybneck, archbishop of Prague, was indignant, and determined to put an end to the harmful deception. He summoned the Bethlehem preacher to his aid, and Huss was made conspicuous by his refutation of the falsehood which was born of priestly avarice. This controversy did much to release Huss from the superstitions and the domination of a corrupt Church, although he had no thought of separation from the Church itself. It was one of those incidents which seemed fortuitous, but was providential, and was an important link in that concatenation of events by which God wrought out his inscrutable designs. The Bohemian priest, who had not joined with the doctors and masters of the university met in the Nigra Rosa chapel in the condemnation of Wyclif's writings, has got further on in his discovery of abuses in the Church and in a conviction of needed reform. Whilst he had, as yet, the sympathy of the archbishop and of the better portion of the priesthood, the most of the latter were arrayed against him. They determined to break the power of the Reformer. They deemed prompt and decisive action a necessity. They believed a charge of heresy could be sustained. He did not interpret the Scriptures in harmony with the Holy Church.



It was evident that he accepted Augustine as his teacher, was familiar with the writings of Robert of Lincoln and was influenced by Conard Waldhausen and Militz of Kremsier, the Moravian who died under a cloud at Avignon, and Matthias of Janow, once the father confessor of Charles IV., who had arraigned the Church at the bar of his censure, daring to pronounce the Holy See the Antichrist of Revelation.

Huss had taken the complexion of his associations, and had gone beyond his teachers in his denunciation of hierarchical power. The archbishop is alarmed at the temerity of the Bethlehem preacher. He sympathizes with his views concerning the moral corruptness of the Romish Church, but he dare not share his opposition to papal authority. The time for action on the part of the clergy was come. Complaint was made to the archbishop of Prague that Huss was a pestiferous heretic who ought to be suppressed. According to Palacky, the terms of their charge were the following: That he had originated a popular feeling against the clergy by which their influence was greatly impaired; that he had identified himself with the Bohemians in opposition to the Germans in the management of the university and the control of other important interests; that he had encouraged disrespect in the Church, and had denounced her right to discipline those who insisted upon freedom of thought; that he had inveighed against the priests as mercenary, prostituting their holy office to personal advantage; and that he had spoken in laudatory terms of that arch-heretic Wyclif, and expressed the wish that his soul might go where the soul of Wyclif was.

Pope Alexander V., influenced by the archbishop of

Prague, issued a bull in December, 1409, in which, having referred to the writings of Wyclif, their circulation in Bohemia and the pernicious results from the dissemination of heresy, he directed the archbishop to take vigorous measures against whatever tended to extend erroneous doctrines and to weaken the power of the Church. All public teaching was to be given thereafter in the cathedrals, and so be brought under the control of the Church. The effect of this restriction would be the closing of all private chapels, in which such men as Huss were accustomed to indulge in great freedom of speech. It was also ordered that any of the clergy who had the writings of Wyclif in their possession should transfer them to the authorities of the Church appointed to receive them, and in the event of their refusal to do this they were to be deprived of their livings. This bull was delayed in its passage to Prague, and was not announced until March 9, 1410. It produced great and widespread excitement. It was intended to break the power of heresy in Bohemia and the contiguous countries. The effect was to rouse a more determined resistance to the assumptions of Rome and the restrictions to religious freedom. John Huss insisted that the word of God was the infallible rule of faith, and that the hierarchy had no right to deny the people access to this only reliable source of truth. He also claimed for himself and others the right to read the writings of such devout men as John Wyclif, of testing their teachings by the superior light of revelation, and of availing themselves of all human thought which was fitted to aid their understanding of the divine revelation. But the archbishop, who had much to do with the framing of the papal bull,

and so framed it that it would strike directly at the person and work of Huss, held his ground. Huss was forbidden to preach in the Bethlehem chapel, and was commanded to deliver to the archbishop all heretical writings in his possession. Huss appealed to the king, and general sympathy was aroused in his behalf. But Zybneck proceeded to execute his purpose, and two hundred volumes of Wyclif's writings were burned. This disregard of personal rights of property and attempted restriction of all freedom in religious inquiry served to widen the breach that separated Huss and his friends from the papal power, and gave an impetus to reform which could not be restrained. The conflict with the papacy was definitely inaugurated. It was to sweep a wider field than Huss dreamed of, and only awaited a later Reformer to carry it to the very gate of Rome. Wyclif and Huss suggested the constellation Gemini shining through the papal night, and a little farther on they will give place to the glorious Sun, whose light they portend and in which they will gladly merge their prophetic beams.

The gentle Huss proved himself a brave defender of the truth. Papal bulls did not intimidate him, threatened severity could not deflect him from duty. Planting his feet on the rock of eternal truth, he looked on the gathering storm. "I avow it," he said, "to be my purpose to defend the truth which God has enabled me to know, and especially the truth of the Holy Scriptures, even to death, since I know that the truth stands and is for ever mighty and abides eternally; and with Him there is no respect of persons. And if the fear of death should terrify me, still I hope in my God and

in the assistance of the Holy Spirit that the Lord will give me firmness. And if I have found favor in his sight he will crown me with martyrdom."

Wenzel (or Wenceslaus), the emperor of Bohemia, whose hatred of the Romish clergy was most pronounced, sympathized with Huss. Many of the leading minds of Bohemia were coming into the light. Whilst popes contended with each other for the succession and supremacy, faith in the papacy was being deeply wounded in the house of its friends. Avignon and Rome were untiringly preparing the way for the Reformation. The council assembled in the great cathedral at Pisa had declared the deposition of both Benedict and Gregory, and had crowned Cardinal Philargi of Milan under the title of Alexander V. The deposed pontiffs continued to perform their functions. The Church wore a triple crown. Alexander V. died soon after at Bologna, and Balthasar Cossa, a Neapolitan, who was the impersonation of the worst of vices, under the title of John XXIII., was chosen in his stead. Huss appealed to the new pope for a release from the restriction laid upon his work by his predecessor. King Wenzel wrote the pope at Bologna in favor of Huss, asking that the Bethlehem chapel should be confirmed in its privileges, that John Huss should be permitted to resume his ministerial duties without interruption or restraint, and that the dispute concerning the writings of Wyclif should be brought to a speedy end.

The pope referred the matter to a commission of cardinals, of whom Otto de Cologna was the chief. The former sentence against Huss was confirmed, and he was cited to appear before the pope at Bologna. A second

commission, with Cardinal Francisco a Zabarilla, archbishop of Florence, at its head, was favorably disposed toward Huss, but the subsequent reference of the matter to Cardinal Brancas resulted unfavorably to the Bohemian. The former sentence was confirmed. Huss was declared a heresiarch. Prague was placed under an interdict. The Church arrayed itself against the secular power and determined to establish its supremacy. Thus the waves of contention met, then spent their force. At length a compromise restraining both parties to the strife secured temporary quiet.

It may be fitting to introduce in this connection some reference to Jerome Faulfisch, better known in history as Jerome of Prague. He was several years the senior of Huss, and had anticipated him somewhat in the adoption of principles inimical to the papal supremacy. He had spent some time at Oxford, England, and had become familiar with the writings of Wyclif, some of which, having been transcribed by himself or others, he carried with him to Prague, whither he returned in 1398. He admired the English Reformer both for his intellectual force and for his moral qualities, and embraced every opportunity of setting forth the views of Wyclif. At first Huss was disturbed by the earnest advocacy of principles so far removed from those which Rome had maintained as absolutely essential, and insisted that Jerome was endangering his own peace of mind and imperiling his soul. He besought him to burn the writings of Wyclif or cast them into the Moldau. But, as we have seen, John Huss soon came into sympathy with Jerome, and even went in advance of him in the maintenance of the Scriptures in opposition to the as-

sumptions of Rome. Somewhat later, Jerome was charged with grave offences against the Church. It was alleged that he had denied the pope's authority to grant indulgences, condemned the worship of pictures, despised the sacred relics, derided the clergy, rejected transubstantiation and had sought in many ways to bring the authority of the Church into contempt. He was traced in all his travels from Oxford to Paris, from Paris to Heidelberg, from Heidelberg to Vienna, and thence to Prague, inciting to rebellion against the Church wherever he went. He was also charged with aiding and abetting the heresy of Huss. Some of these allegations he pronounced absolutely false, and others true. As concerning his relations to Huss, he frankly replied : " I call God to witness that I have never seen in his conduct nor heard in lectures by him anything exceptional. Nay, I confess that for his gentle and correct life and the sacred truths which he explained to the people from the word of God I was his intimate friend ; for his person and for truth's sake a defender of his honor in whatever place I might find myself." The sympathy of Jerome did much to lighten the sorrows of Huss, and the names of these two Reformers are linked in the reverence and love of the generations following. Jerome in an hour of weakness appended his name to a comprehensive recantation, then was deeply humiliated with a sense of his cowardice, and thereafter stood fast to his convictions, even with the gleam of bayonets about him and the glare of flames on his face. He survived Huss only one year. Condemned in the münster at Constance, he chanted the creed in a clear, full voice, his upturned countenance reflecting the glory of the nearing heaven. Then he walked calmly



out the Gottlieben gate to the clover-field, knelt in prayer before the stake, interceded in behalf of his enemies, and submitted even with joyfulness to the agonies of death, which were so prolonged that it was said, "One might have gone from St. Clement's church at Prague to the bridge over the Moldau before he ceased to breathe."

We return to our narrative. The temporary quiet which Huss enjoyed was disturbed by significant events which kindled afresh the fires of persecution. John XXIII., September 9, 1411, issued a bull against King Ladislaus of Naples, who had espoused the cause of Gregory XII. He was pronounced a heretic, a blasphemer, a base schismatic, whose power must be promptly and for ever broken. Huss opposed the bull. He had opposed the action of the council at Pisa in its recognition of Alexander V. and John XXIII. as legitimate popes, the one at Bologna, the other at Rome. But he was no longer in sympathy with John. His vices were so glaring, and his whole life so constant a travesty on the gospel of Jesus Christ, that he could no longer recognize his authority as pontiff nor countenance his malicious procedure against the Neapolitan king.

In Prague the excitement occasioned by the pope's bull advanced to an alarming height. John XXIII. was pronounced Antichrist because he had proclaimed a crusade against Christians. The priests in the cathedral denounced Huss in terms that paled the cheeks of darkness. Huss replied firmly, forcibly, in the spirit of his Lord. The people were with him, the papal hierarchy was arrayed against him. The breach was widening and God was leading his own by a way they knew not.



Huss also vigorously opposed the indulgences by which the pontiff would carry out his designs against Ladislaus. Palatz, once the friend, but later the enemy and accuser, of Huss at Constance, regarded the indulgences of John XXIII. as a matter of indifference. Huss denounced them as a violation of divine law and a dishonor to Christ. He said with great feeling—and in saying it broke the tie which had bound the two in a cherished friendship—“Palatz is my friend, truth is my friend, and, both being my friends, it is my sacred duty to give the first honor to truth.”

King Wenzel had approved the papal bull and indulgences, and determined to terminate the opposition of Huss and his friends. This purpose was perhaps the fruit of personal considerations rather than of any intelligent conviction as to the moral questions involved. But there were many who had listened to the teachings in the Bethlehem chapel who would not consent to the insult to Christ and his truth which papal indulgences inflicted; and one day, the crowds surging to and fro in the chief cathedral, when the venders of these pressed them upon the people with blasphemous importunity and sought to magnify their benefit, three young men shouted their denial in the ears of the sacrilegious priest: “Thou liest! Master Huss has taught us better than that.” They were seized, imprisoned and condemned to death. Huss pleaded for their release. Students in the university came in throngs demanding the same. But the headsman’s axe ended their days. It was a solemn day in Prague. The heavens seemed robed in sackcloth. Some thought they heard the sound of invisible wings overhead, dividing the gloom, letting down a little of

Heaven's light on the path of God's suffering flock. The martyrs were borne to the Bethlehem chapel. Funeral dirges were sung on the way thither, and hymns of confiding trust within the sheltering walls. Huss preached with great tenderness, and a holy wrath bided its time and the will of Him whose kingdom ruleth over all.

Huss so arrayed the force of argument and of his mighty influence against the whole corrupting system of indulgences that he was gathering the fagots for his burning. But it mattered not. He was prepared at any cost to defend the truth and honor his Master. The spirit of reform would not down at the pope's bidding; floods could not drown nor flames consume it. It was in the hearts of the people. It breathed in the very air about them. It sung its night-song when storms gathered. It climbed to the summits of the mountains, and, turning its face toward the east, waited for the breaking of the day. "It will come," said Huss. "It is near," said Jerome of Prague; "the Lord will hasten it in his time."



JOHN HUSS AND THE COUNCIL OF  
CONSTANCE.

*“ To the law and to the testimony ; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”*

ISA. 8 : 20.

*“ The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Ghost speaking in the Scripture.”*

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. I. SEC. X.

## JOHN HUSS AND THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE.

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THE city of Constance is situated on the beautiful lake of the same name, and belongs at present to the duchy of Baden, having been ceded by Austria at the beginning of the present century. At the time of which we write it had a population of fifty thousand, but its decadence began soon after, and it now numbers less than seven thousand inhabitants. The general topography of Constance and the contiguous country is attractive—the peaceful lake on the one side, the wooded hills dividing the great stretch of meadow-lands on the other, the Rhine issuing from the lake forming the Unter See and flowing through historic scenes until it leaps into a lower channel at the Chute du Rhin, passing old Schaffhausen on its way to the English Channel and the Atlantic. We pronounced Constance, the central feature of this scene, as we saw it from the steamer's deck, a singularly beautiful city—its broad avenues intersected by narrow streets, its venerable churches lifting their spires among the trees, the towers of the great münster rising conspicuously above the high houses, and around the ancient town meadows and orchards that seem to be consciously at rest under the subdued light of the setting day. That quiet scene presented a marked contrast to the bustling city of Sigismund's reign and the unseemly strifes that

kindled the fires of persecution and irrigated the soil with human blood.

The famous Council of Constance assembled in November, 1414. Its primary object, an unwitting subversion of the papacy, was to declare the authority of general councils superior to that of Roman pontiffs, but it was not confined to its original purpose. It was convened by the emperor, and John XXIII., one of the three rival popes, reluctantly assented to the summons. The stately pontiff, fearing the action of the council as related to his supremacy, yet hoping that some adventitious circumstance might establish his claim, set out on his journey northward. As he approached the city, catching a view of its cathedral-towers from an elevation whence its path wound its way into the valley, he expressed a presentiment of evil which had oppressed his spirit along the way. A little later Sigismund, the emperor, accompanied by a royal train, entered Constance. On the 11th of October, John Huss left Prague, resolved to appear before the council, let the result be what it might, the emperor pledging his royal word for the security of his person. The bishop of the diocese had previously furnished him a certificate of orthodoxy, given, perhaps, through fear of the people, who accounted Huss such a prophet as John the Baptist. Very painful was the preacher's departure from the Bethlehem chapel. Standing on the little square not far from his own door, he looked at the familiar house of prayer where, with occasional interruptions, he had ministered for twelve eventful years. His soul had been profoundly stirred as he gazed into the sea of faces that turned toward the high pulpit and, an inquiring multitude, listened as for their lives.



The farewell to his chapel trembled on his lips and bespoke the depth of his affection for the flock. The greatest intellects are ordinarily associated with the greatest hearts. Whilst his courage did not fail him in sight of any foe, his tender love to his people shrank from parting words which he feared a choked utterance would obscure. Hence he wrote them a message which breathed forth his tender affection and confiding trust: "Beloved, if my death ought to contribute to the Master's glory, pray that it may come quickly and that he may enable me to support all my calamities with constancy. You will probably never more behold my face at Prague; but should the will of the all-powerful God deign to restore me to you, let us then advance with a firmer heart in the knowledge and the love of his law." He went calmly forth, even as Paul went to Jerusalem, prison-walls frowning upon him. He went as grandly as Martin Luther afterward went to the Diet of Worms.

We seem to follow him in his journeyings southward. At length he reaches a hill which affords a last view of Prague. He brushes away the tears that he may see it, the city through which flows the Moldau covering the heights and sitting by the river-banks; and he experiences sensations more sacred than those which struggled in the spirit of Mary Stuart when she caught, across the uneasy waters, her final view of the France she loved. Then he addressed himself to the grander future. He had left his dear Prague for ever.

The days go on. The streets of Constance are crowded. John the pontiff, Sigismund the emperor, Huss the heresiarch are there. Bishops, archbishops, cardinals and nearly two thousand priests in dark robes pass to and

fro. Margraves, counts, barons and hooded knights stand apart from the motley crowd. Electors and dukes and men whose fame has crossed the Rhine impart added dignity to the scene.

At first Huss was unmolested. Pope John had declared that a hair of his head should not be harmed. Like Paul who preached in his hired house at Rome under the very eaves of Nero's palace, the Bohemian preached Christ and holiness to those who came to his lodgings, and with a few friends maintained daily worship in the sanctuary of his temporary home. But this quietness was not for long. His enemies were busy. They even forgot Benedict and Gregory and John and the unseemly strife among the pontiffs in their hatred of the heretic from Prague. He was, in fact, the chief personage in Constance—a greater than emperors and popes. His name shall outlive theirs, and his influence fill a broader field. The spirit of persecution increased. Placards were attached to the walls of the houses and in public places denouncing the enemy of Rome and bidding the people beware of his teachings. An excommunicated heretic deserved the stake.

The council, after much delay, was opened on November 5th. The arrangements for the impressive initiative were completed with the early dawn. Then the bells in all the church-towers rang out the signal for the convocation. A long procession of ecclesiastical dignitaries and ordinary priests and representatives of the secular power moved along the streets which led to the great münster. The cathedral was crowded from the doors to the high altar. Confused voices blended with the sound of the organ, and the church-columns cast weird

shadows over the scene. None could forecast the future of the council now gathered with such pomp in the cathedral by the Rhine. The usual prayers were offered and a sermon was preached. Then the great congregation dispersed.

On the 16th of November the council was again convened. One of the cardinals celebrated mass. John XXIII. preached a sermon from Zech. 7 : 16 : "Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbor ; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates." The discourse condemned the preacher. He was by no means an exponent of the truth, and his vices were notorious, whilst his personal ambitions trampled on every essential to peace. So thought many who listened to the words of the pontiff on that memorable day. Cardinal Zarabella read the papal bull in response to which this council was then convened.

Whilst the question of the relation of the pope to the general councils of the Church was prominent, involving the right of John XXIII. to occupy the papal chair, this pontiff thought his own interests might be ultimately subserved by diverting the attention of the council, for the present, to the case of Huss the heretic. A zeal for the doctrinal integrity of the Church might strengthen the position of John and give him an advantage over Benedict and Gregory, his rivals. In base violation of his pledge to protect the Bohemian he instigated proceedings against him.

A few days later a company of soldiers might have been seen in the vicinity of the house where Huss had his lodgings. They were prepared to arrest the heretic and drag him before his inquisitors in case he should

disregard a citation about to be presented. Presently four men appeared who inquired for Huss. Their dress and bearing indicated the significance of their errand. The mayor of the city was accompanied by two bishops and a knight. They informed Huss that grave charges of heresy had been preferred against him, and that he was cited to appear at once before the pope and cardinals to make answer to the same. He offered no resistance. A horse had been provided for his conveyance to the place of trial. He mounted into the saddle and rode away. John de Chlum, his friend and protector, attended him to the episcopal palace. Several interviews were held with the cardinal and his accusers. At length eight definite charges were formulated and presented. They may be concisely stated as embracing a denial of transubstantiation; of the right of a priest living in flagrant sin to administer the holy sacraments; of the assumption that the hierarchy is the true Church; of any advantage accruing to the spiritual body as the representative of the truth from its support by the state; of the official superiority of bishops; of the power of the keys as vested in a corrupt Church; and that, whilst he denied these essential features of the doctrinal system and probity of Rome, he had disregarded the authority of the Church as related to his excommunication, and had continued without intermission to discharge the functions of the priestly office. He was also represented to be the inciter of seditions, a disturber of the peace and the persistent advocate of errors not enumerated in the charges preferred against him, usually denominated Wyclifian, originated by the arch-heretic of England. This latter

statement was vague, but it was calculated to inflame the public mind and secure the condemnation of Huss.

John Huss was a Realist, as was Wyclif. Realism was supposed to be antagonistic to the Church. It struck at the authority of pontiffs and councils, whilst it held that the Bible was the sole as it is the sufficient rule of faith and conduct. The head and front of this Bohemian's offence was his disregard of that authority. He was ever asking, What does the word of God teach? Papal infallibility went down before the revelation which came from heaven. As to the distinction between Realism and Nominalism, the council at Constance did not have a clear conception. Both these systems of philosophy were occupied with the subject of general ideas in opposition to particular things, which are constantly changing and cannot furnish a basis for a natural science. The Realists held that general ideas or things have a real existence; so Plato had taught and the leading philosophers of his day. The Nominalists insisted that general ideas are only names or words; so taught Aristotle and Porphyry. The Realists were more numerous and influential than the Nominalists. The controversy between them was severe. When argument failed they resorted to the sword. Neither party seemed to have a clear conception of the subject-matter of their dispute. The playful description of the dialectician of an earlier century, as given by John of Salisbury, was quite applicable to the time of Huss. The sagacious and seraphic philosopher "is prepared to solve the old question about genera and species; and while he is laboring upon it the universe becomes old; more time is consumed upon it than the Cæsars spent in conquering and subdu-

ing the world; more money is expended than all the wealth which Cræsus ever possessed. For this subject has occupied many so long that, after consuming their whole lives upon it, they have not understood either that or anything else." It was enough for the council to know that Huss accepted Realism. For that he must be condemned.

It was also alleged that Huss had adopted the teaching of Jacobellus, a priest of St. Michael's church in Prague, respecting the giving of the cup to the laity in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Matthias of Janow had condemned the withholding of the cup, and Jacobellus had probably received his impressions from Matthias, whose influence upon the religious thought of his age was widespread and potential. Huss insisted that there was no warrant in the institution of the Lord's Supper or in apostolic usage for denying the cup to the laity, as was the custom of the Romish Church. This seems, at first view, a matter of little importance. But it involved a grave principle. It was an exercise of private judgment, which was a contravention of an established order and was regarded as contempt of the infallible Church. Rome had settled all questions concerning the Eucharist, and the expression of even an opinion on the subject could not be tolerated. John Huss, it was alleged, deserved the severest condemnation of the Church he had insulted and in which his teachings were calculated to create a dangerous schism. This appeal from pontifical ruling to the word of God and independent interpretations of it was the entrance of a wedge which ultimately divided the Church. The sagacious priesthood discerned the significance of



the apparently unimportant innovation, and pronounced its author a dangerous heretic.\*

The sentiment against the Bohemian was a resistless flood. Whatever was mythical and real was submerged by it. Trivial things were magnified. The molehill became a mountain. Things that were not understood were construed as opposition to the authority to which independent judgment should bow. The mock trial went on. After a few days Huss was sent to the prison of the Dominican monastery on an island near the foot of the lake, a loathsome place, under the walls of which flowed the sewage of the city. The prison remains to this day. It was an act of cruelty which all Christendom has ever since condemned. No appeal to pope, cardinals or the populace was sufficient to secure his release.

In the following May, Pope John was deposed. The reasons for this action of the council were obviously sufficient. It was alleged that he was "the supporter of iniquity, the defender of simonists, the enemy of all virtue, the slave of lasciviousness, a devil incarnate"—a most unworthy successor of St. Peter; and this fact raises the question whether the apostolic succession, if unbroken until then, could continue itself through such

\* Just here an important statement deserves record. The council had admitted the use of both kinds, the bread and the cup, in the primitive Church, but added that the Romish Church had condemned the giving of the cup to the laity. Now, observe that in doing this it had arrayed itself against Christ, who instituted the Supper. It had exalted itself above God. This is a significant fact, and declares the blasphemous attitude of the Church of Rome. Huss accepted Christ as his teacher, not the pope, not the councils of the Church: for this he must die.



a pontiff as John XXIII. In anticipation of the decision of the council, the pope fled in disguise from Constance and gathered a few friends in anxious conference at Schaffhausen. Then followed his imprisonment and formal deposition, and the pope was cast off as an object of inexpressible loathing, whilst not one of all who had once bowed the knee to this so-called vicar of Christ remained to do him reverence.

But this procedure against John brought no relief to Huss. He was carried in chains to the castle of Gottlieben. Again, he was removed to the Franciscan convent in Constance. He was repeatedly summoned before the council. The men who had condemned John XXIII. might have been expected to sympathize with Huss. They had denounced the corruptions that entered the Church; they had condemned the strife of the rival popes who jostled each other in the effort to gratify an unholy ambition; they had humiliated John and cried aloud for general reform in high places and in low. But they were as resolute in their determination to suppress heresy. Huss was a heretic. He must die. Wherein was he a heretic? Huss repeatedly declared his loyalty to the Church. He even accepted transubstantiation as a scriptural dogma. He believed in the Trinity. He was in accord with the teachings of Athanasius and Augustine. He had said, "I am ready, with all my heart, to fulfill the apostolical mandates;" but (he had added) "I call apostolical mandates the doctrines of the apostles of Christ; and so far as the papal mandates agree with these, so far will I obey them most willingly. But if I see anything in them at variance with these, I shall not obey, even though the stake

were staring me in the face." He was not so far removed from Romanism as was Wyclif, but he followed close after him, and had he lived a decade longer he might have been as advanced a Reformer as his great teacher across the Channel.

His real offence is well stated to have been his complaint against the immorality of the priests and his unwillingness to accept the decisions of councils when out of harmony with the word of God. He was a Bible Christian. He planted his feet on the sacred Scriptures as on a rock which had defied the violence of storms and the wear of waves. He exalted Christ above the pope, and determined, whatever pontiffs and councils might require, to glory only in the cross. He was a Protestant, although the name was as yet unknown. He bore the torch of divine truth, and when his course was run he handed it down to the miner of Eisleben, who led God's sacramental host in the light thereof into the Land of Promise.

The council met in the cathedral. A surging mass of human beings crowded every available space. Sigismund was present; Robert Hallem was there. Both the dignitaries of the Church and the representatives of the secular power had been summoned to condemn the Bohemian, whose integrity of life and beauty of character none could honestly dispute.

The long array of charges was proclaimed, and Huss attempted to give an answer to each accusation. The council listened or commanded silence as best suited its purpose. Some of the charges were wholly false; some were true and honored the accused. His enemies found nothing in him worthy of death. But they could not

be deflected from their purpose. He must burn at the stake. He was arrayed in priestly robes, holding a chalice, as if about to perform the functions of his high office. The rabble mocked him. Priests applauded. The designated officials took from him the chalice, declaring him a Judas who had sold his Lord. Then they stripped him of his sacerdotal robes, uttering curses loud and deep. He meekly replied that he could readily bear the intended degradation for the truth and the Master's sake. On his head they placed a paper crown covered with pictures of devils, and devoted his soul to the prince of darkness, whilst he commended himself to his most merciful Master, Jesus Christ. On the crown they wrote his accusation, "Heresiarch." He bore each indignity with a holy meekness and thought of his Lord who for him bore a "far rougher and weightier crown of thorns."

When his degradation was completed the Church committed him to the secular power. Sigismund gave him into the hands of the elector palatine, and the latter transferred him to the mayor of Constance, who directed the executioners to carry out the sentence of death even to its minutest details. The officers of the elector led Huss out of the münster. A company of armed men surrounded him and an excited multitude followed. The route was circuitous, for the procession must needs pass the episcopal residence, in the vicinity of which the writings of the Bohemian were to be burned. Then they passed down the long street which led them through the Gottlieben gate into the open meadow. Crossing an open space and through the scanty orchards, they came to the place of execution. The stake was erected and

the fagots were gathered. Huss fell upon his knees and prayed, breathing his soul's desire in the inspired words of the Psalmist, repeatedly saying with holy fervor, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." They who stood by were deeply moved by the manner and speech of the man who dared to die rather than be untrue to God and to himself. The executioners then bound him with a chain, placed about his neck, to the stake. Addressing the multitude about him, Huss said: "The chief aim of my preaching was to teach men repentance and the forgiveness of sins according to the truth of the gospel of Christ; therefore I am prepared to die with joyful soul." His thoughts were divided between his dear church in Prague, to which he had sent messages of love, and the Church on high, to which he was soon to be joined. Then the fagots were kindled. As the flames leapt upward he sang with a loud voice, "Jesus, Son of the living God, have mercy upon me." Again he repeated the same words. A third time he assayed to raise the trustful prayer, but with the sweet name of Jesus on his lips his utterance ceased, and John Huss was with his Lord, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. Then the executioners gathered his ashes and cast them into the Rhine, and the Rhine bore them to the sea, and the sea hung its bow of hope in the sky.

One year later Jerome of Prague died for the truth's sake on the same spot, and to-day a great stone, brought from a distance, marks the place in the clover-field whence chariots of fire bore the two Bohemian saints to the home above.

But though dead they live. The Reformation in

Germany was the fruitage of the Reformation which Huss, under God, inaugurated in Bohemia. The Church he formed has continued, through varied experiences, in an unbroken succession of believers until the present.

Shortly after his death the followers of Huss were divided into two parties, the Calixtins and the Taborites. The former, who took their name from *calix*, a cup, because they insisted on the administration of the Supper in both kinds, were unwilling to separate themselves from the Romish Church. But the Taborites, who took their designation from a mountain on which they had worshiped, declared themselves in favor of the formation of a religious organization which should be a protest against the corruptions of Rome and a refuge for the oppressed. After the death of Wenzel political differences arose. Sigismund, the brother of the deceased emperor, claimed the right of succession to the throne. But he was the friend of Rome and had basely surrendered Huss to his enemies. Besides all this, he had declared himself entirely opposed to the principles of reform in Church and State which the Hussites maintained and would carry out to their legitimate results. The people defied his authority. They would escape the tyranny he proposed or die in the attempt to terminate his power. At Kuttenberg two ambassadors whom they had sent to negotiate terms of peace were brutally murdered, and four thousand Taborites subsequently shared a similar fate. At Leitmeritz twenty-four leading citizens were seized, bound with ropes and cast into the river—a culmination in cruelty which had a parallel nearly two centuries later when in the Grosse Ring, a

public square in Prague, near the site of Bethlehem chapel, twenty-seven Protestant Bohemians were beheaded, passing in slow procession under a flashing sword which is still preserved, and their heads carried to one of the towers of Carlsbrücke, or Charles's Bridge, where for ten years they were exhibited to passers-by, who jeered or wept as they beheld the ghastly sight. The Hussites of the fifteenth century were just coming from under the shadow of the papal hierarchy. They were often unwise, not being as yet emancipated from the control of Romish principles which led to brutal deeds, and their attitude of resistance to autocratic rule provoked imperial displeasure. Then Sigismund issued the call to arms. Germany clasped hands with Rome, and they massed their united forces. The extinction of heresy and the liberties of Bohemia seemed assured. The Bohemians looked to God for succor and girded themselves for the strife. They were led to battle by the one-eyed Ziska, one of the greatest generals known to history, who, when entirely blind, saw more than the most of warriors with two eyes. He seemed endowed with a supernatural vision, and directed his armies with a peerless skill, and so inspired them with his own prowess that they were never known to turn their backs to a foe. Singing their favorite battle-hymn, "Ye warriors of God our Lord," they went forth to the fight. Sigismund suffered inglorious defeat. The hills of Bohemia caught the shout of the victors, and bore it down the valleys. But it was not long until Ziska was stricken down by the pestilence and went to his grave. The people mourned his untimely death and refused to be comforted. Near his tomb may be seen the inscription,



“O Huss, here reposes John Ziska thy avenger, and the emperor himself has quailed before him.”

Again Sigismund gathered an imposing army two hundred thousand strong. Germany was proud of her stalwart braves. The emperor was confident of success. The Bohemians were, in comparison, an insignificant army. Now liberty and heresy will surely go down. Instead of Ziska was Procop—inferior in some respects to his great master, but not unworthy the mantle the invincible general had bequeathed him. The two armies met near the walls of Töplitz. The Goliath of the North mocked the armies of Bohemia. A brief advantage secured by Sigismund's forces was succeeded by the hasty flight of his broken columns, the Hussites pursuing them over the long swaths of their dead. The spirit of Ziska seemed to ride in his triumphal chariot as in other days.

Then came a pause in the strife, and the smoke of battle disappeared. The dead were numbered and the living tested their strength. Rome was troubled. The Bohemians seem unconquerable. Messages were sent to Sigismund, and pledges of enlarged support. The Church gathered her forces from near and from afar. Cardinal Cessarini exchanged the red hat for a helmet and the shepherd's crook for a sword. The aid of our Lady the Holy Mother was invoked, and the papal benediction was given. Bohemia was again on the defensive, and loyalty to fatherland, forgetting all religious differences and conscious of right, advanced to meet the enemy. Cessarini led his forces through the forests of Bohemia on the west, expecting to crush the defiant foe. But in the first shock of battle he was



driven back. A second time he was repulsed. The Bohemians pursued the retreating armies and thousands perished. The cardinal was humiliated and his forces demoralized. No appeal could rally them to a fresh attack. No entreaty of the pope could persuade Cesarini to further conflict. Then followed diplomatic intrigues by which Sigismund hoped to extinguish heresy and secure the throne. The demands of the Hussites were granted in part, and the Calixtins joined with the Romanists in receiving Sigismund as the emperor of Bohemia. But it was soon apparent that imperial pledges were valueless, and the Taborites, who composed what may be termed the Protestant element, determined upon another effort to secure the liberty for which so many of their brethren had died. But their allies, the Calixtins, had deserted them. One of their own generals proved a traitor. The opposing army overwhelmed them and Bohemia was yoked to the imperial car. It had been better if the Hussites had trusted less in carnal weapons, and more, as they afterward did, in the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Yet many believe that they have been, in a measure at least, unjustly condemned for their resort to arms. They were not, in fact, the offensive party. Sigismund inaugurated the contest, and the pope aided it. It was not until the Taborites discovered the perfidy of the emperor the Calixtins had accepted that they assumed the offensive and resisted the encroachments of a powerful and unscrupulous enemy—the man who had broken his royal word with John Huss, and would rejoice in the extermination of all who dared support the principles in defence of which the Bohemian had died.

Through changeful experiences of hope and fear, of quiet and persecution, the disciples of the martyred Huss held on their way. Banished from home, hunted like beasts of prey, preparing their food and reading their Bibles and singing their plaintive psalms in the depth of night whilst their enemies slept, they proved their devotion to truth and godliness by the trials they endured. Waldensian exiles, crossing the Austrian boundary after the burning of Stephen their beloved bishop, associated themselves with their Bohemian brethren, and later still with equally devoted Moravians, under Count Zinzendorf, added another tributary to the widening current of the Reformed religion. These elements, gathered from different parts of Central Europe, consecrated to God in a baptism of fire, gaining clearer apprehensions of the gospel of Christ as the years went on, maintaining a simple and spiritual worship closely conformed to that of apostolic times, and adopting a church polity essentially representative, kindled their watchfires amid the mountain-fastnesses and waited for the salvation of God. They were Protestant Christians. They rebuked the corruptions of Rome by their holy living. They bore testimony to the glory of Christ as the only Saviour of sinners, the only Head of the Church, the Comforter of the weary and the unerring Guide to the saints' everlasting rest. The persecuted believers who worshiped at Lititz and built their simple chapels along the borders of Bohemia and Moravia, conveying the sweet evangel to their descendants, who gave it to the generations following, known to-day as the Moravian Brethren, eminent for piety and devotion to Bible truth, their mission-stations reaching from the equator to the Arctic

pole, their zeal stimulating the zeal of every branch of the Reformed Church,—are in an important sense the spiritual children of John Huss, his crown of glory, an infinite indemnification for all his sufferings which shall shine with ever-increasing lustre whilst eternity endures.



MARTIN LUTHER.

*“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.”*

2 THESS. 2 : 7.

*“Who can forgive sins but God only?”*

MARK 2 : 7.

*“God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified: and although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may by their sins fall under God’s fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of his countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.”*

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XI. SEC. V.

## MARTIN LUTHER.

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**A**FTER the conversion of Constantine the Great religion adapted itself to its worldly eminence and lost its spiritual power. The decadence of piety continued until the last vestige was ready to disappear. The Dark Ages grew darker, the worldliness of the Church increased and the corruptions of the clergy became more complete as time advanced. Now and then a Wyclif or Tyndall, a Huss or a Savonarola, bore aloft the torch of truth, but it only made the darkness more apparent. The ecclesiastical hierarchy of the fifteenth century was the servant of sin. The Church was an offensive sepulchre, full of dead men's bones.

Then God appeared upon the scene. The world needed him, was lost without him. The truth must be recovered, primitive piety restored and the Church regenerated by power from above. But it is God's plan to work through intermediate agencies and to employ the least promising. As Jesus at the first sought his apostles among the fishing-boats that skirted the Galilean lake, so now he seeks among the humble that man by whom his Church shall arise. And to-day the student of history says, as did the mother of our Lord, "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree."



There is no name so familiar to the Christian world of latter ages, and so revered by it, no name which has been so great a power in the wide domain of religious thought and life, as that which for four centuries has been associated more generally than any other with the great Reformation—a name which is the synonym of moral heroism, the watchword of the Christian Church and the pledge of glorious triumphs in the ages yet to come. All Christendom is to-day turning over the leaves of history that it may fix its eyes where its thoughts and heart have been—upon the name which graces the most lustrous page of that record which magnifies the grace and power of God.

It may be well to notice here some of the errors which the Reformation discovered and renounced: the denial of private judgment, the corruption of the doctrine of justification by faith, and a system of indulgences, all of which continue until the present in the Roman Church.

1. In the Romish Church authority virtually rested in the pope, speaking *ex cathedra*. He was and is the truth. He interpreted the Scriptures, making them to accord with the historic faith of the Church. He appealed to other sources of belief, such as tradition and apocryphal books and the decretals of councils, and compelled assent to his dictum as based upon them, or anathematized the recalcitrant. No loyal Romanist was permitted to exercise his reason or interpret the word of God in opposition to the Roman pontiff. If the pope, as pope, said that two and two made six, that the prismatic colors were a mere figment of the imagination, that a wafer was the actual body and blood of Christ, he was to be believed though the testimony of the senses and of

consciousness were against his declarations. Intelligence was set aside; private judgment was forbidden. Reason and conscience were mere vassals and bent the knee to papal authority. Then, evidently, the pope was the Lord of the conscience and held the keys of heaven and hell. It may be a relief to mental indolence and imbecility to permit a spiritual autocrat to take the soul into his custody, think for it, direct its faith and conduct it into the infinite hereafter. But that were to imperil every interest in both worlds, and to degrade man to the level of the irrational brute bound to the master's crib.

It was Luther's advocacy of private judgment—that which elevates man to whom the Spirit of the Almighty has given understanding, which imparts a sense of personal accountability to God, which impresses the obligation to search the Scriptures that reveal all duty, the only rational ground of hope and the way of life—that more than anything else roused the indignation of Rome, since it smote down the proud assumptions of the hierarchy and released the people from its spiritual autonomy.

2. The prevailing system of indulgences was a source of power which Rome utilized. It furnished oftentimes the only solution for financial difficulties, and enabled the hierarchy to surround itself with greater pomp and splendor than were possessed by earthly courts which were its servants. The Church taught that Christ had made such satisfaction for sin that believers were released from its *eternal* punishment. Their ultimate enthronement with God was assured. But the sacrifice of Christ did not remove the temporal consequences of wrongdoing. Believers were subject to the rod as long as they lived. They might accumulate guilt which would

prolong their sufferings in the world of spirits even until the day of judgment. This punishment, present and purgatorial, might be mitigated or arrested by penances and works prescribed by the Church, by fastings, prayers, pilgrimages, wearing of haircloth and spiked girdles and by severe menial service.

This end might be reached in another way. The payment of money to the Church was accepted as a substitute for penances and meritorious works. These contributions secured an appropriation of the works of supererogation performed by others. The sources were two: (1) The superabundant merits of Christ. Cardinal Cajetan in the Diet of Augsburg declared the faith of the Church respecting the value of Christ's death. One drop of his blood would have been a sufficient satisfaction for sin. But his sacrifice exceeded the legal demand. This excess was a wealth of merit on which the pope—and, under him, the priesthood—might draw; and this being imputed to the purchaser, he was released from the obligation to temporal punishment in this life, and it brought early release from purgatorial sufferings. By this theory the supererogatory merits of Christ's sacrifice and penances prescribed by priests were put on the same level, and the offender could make his election. The application of the former, involving a pecuniary consideration, was preferred alike by the Church and by the subject who availed himself of it. The works of supererogation performed by the saints were included in the same category. It was possible to do more and to be holier than God required, and this redundancy inured to the benefit of imperfect believers, who purchased as required from the chancellors of the holy exchequer.

The pope's check was honored in the Bank of Heaven and he could distribute at his pleasure. Whosoever sins he remitted were remitted. It requires but little reflection to discover the power which this doctrine of indulgences placed in the hands of the Roman priesthood—a power which wrought immeasurable evil to the Church, which bound the papist in abject submission to his spiritual teachers, and greatly encouraged sin, casting its affront in the face of infinite holiness and dragging souls to perdition. It is no marvel that a clear apprehension of this unscriptural, sordid dogma and an earnest scrutiny of its fruits roused in the mind of Martin Luther a spirit of profound indignation, and inspired the boldness which nailed the theses to the Wittenberg cathedral—a protest against iniquity which rolled its voice of thunder over papal Europe.

3. In the fifteenth century Aristotle was in great repute, and was not displaced in a later age by even Descartes and Kant. He was the oracle to whom philosophers appealed. His works were translated into the language of this period. In the Church he was recognized as a forerunner of Christ, and his dialectics aided the interpretation of the Scriptures. The very obscurity and ambiguity of Aristotle's writings made him available in the interests of Romish errors. His theory of substantial forms favored transubstantiation. His system of philosophy, as then taught, though not understood, minimized sin and modified the doctrines of grace. Then arose a distinction which made justification objective and subjective, the result of faith and of personal holiness. The wedding-garment was not simply, as the term clearly implied, that which clothed the soul and

was put on from without, or an imputed righteousness, but also an inherent goodness, the two, as warp and woof, constituting the robe of merit which admits to the marriage-supper. This theory ultimately diverted attention from Christ to the appointed ceremonies of the Church, to self-mortification prescribed by the priests, to penances as an atonement for sin, and to offerings made for the purchase of pardon and divine favor. It was admitted that justification as an objective act was secured by the merits of Christ's death, but after its appropriation the recipient wrought out a subjective holiness by his own exertions, and so shared the final result with God. Martin Luther still clung to this inner element of justification when climbing Pilate's Staircase on his knees. The real basis of the soul's acceptance was man's work, not divine grace. This was the fundamental error of Rome, and it vitiated the whole system of faith. Out of it grew penances, the mass, purgatory, asceticism and all that was self-righteous and servile in the religion of Rome. It was this that darkened the hope and saddened the lives and exhausted the strength of a people who were devoutly religious, but had failed to discover the central saving truth of the gospel of Christ. It was this that gave intensity to a superstitious worship, that bound Romanists as with hooks of steel to an arrogant priesthood and deflected them from the way which joined earth to heaven. Luther rejected the falsehood. He exalted the finished work of Christ appropriated by faith, and published peace to the laboring and heavy-laden. So essential did he esteem the doctrine of justification by faith that he pronounced it the "doctrine of a rising or falling Church."

There were other errors which, together with these, will be noticed in the course of our narrative, which we now resume.

Martin Luther, the central figure of the Reformation, was born Nov. 10, 1483, at Eisleben, a village of Saxony, at the base of the Hartz Mountains. His birth was as humble as the place of his nativity was obscure. His parents were peasants who had lived in the hamlet of Mora, close by the Thuringian forests. John Luther, his father, was a miner and poor, yet he was a man of rare intelligence in his day, and distinguished by an integrity of character which commanded the respect and confidence of his neighbors. Soon after he removed from Eisleben to Mansfeld, drawn thither by the richness of its mines, he was promoted to several magisterial offices, which he filled with credit to himself and to the advantage of the community which had thus honored him. The mother was exceptionally pious, and, though unduly stern, was characterized by gentle traits which won for her the affection of all who intimately knew her, whilst her kind offices of sympathy cheered many a darkened home.

Young Martin's life was thoughtful and sober. The law of heredity had secured him elements of character which were to fit him for his great mission; the atmosphere of his home fostered natural seriousness and high conceptions of the earnestness and the possibilities of life.

When in his fourteenth year he was sent to a school at Magdeburg, but was soon transferred to Eisenach, where he continued his studies in the midst of great privations. He was possessed of a sweet voice of much



compass and power, and was accustomed to add to his means of subsistence, which were meagre, by singing from door to door and begging his bread. He referred to this in later life when he said, "I myself was once a poor mendicant, seeking my bread at people's houses, particularly at Eisenach, my own dear Eisenach."

About this time young Martin was employed as a chorister in the village church. A lady of some wealth, an attendant at the same church, was much impressed by the lad's proficiency in the service, his cultured tones and thoughtful face and evident superiority to his companions. One evening she heard the familiar voice in front of her dwelling, and looking out saw on the street the boy who had won her admiration in the church. See God's hand in this. She kindly invited him to her home, and thereafter he was a member of the Cotta household—through necessity a mendicant no more. He cherished with all the tenderness which marked a character truly great the memory of this generous friend in all the years of toil and danger which followed, and often recalled the happy days spent under her roof, declaring, "There is nothing sweeter on earth than the heart of a woman in which piety dwells."

No longer constrained to beg for bread, he gave himself with renewed energy to his studies. It is recorded that he excelled in "Latin, eloquence and poetry." At the age of eighteen he entered the university at Erfurt, that he might prepare himself for the profession of law. Here he familiarized himself with the works of Duns Scotus the Franciscan and Thomas Aquinas, studied the Orations of Cicero and communed with his favorite poet who wrote the *Æneid* and *Georgics*.



The old library with its musty volumes was Martin's favorite resort. He also sat at the feet of the men who adorned the Periclean age, approved their philosophies or condemned them, and with that persistence which marked all his life went below the surface, seeking for primal things. But there was one book which absorbed his attention more than all the rest. He read it in an ecstasy of joy or wept over its pages. It taught a diviner philosophy than Aristotle knew, and its poetry surpassed that of the Mantuan bard. All this while he was a devout Romanist; he dwelt among the tombs; ceremony was more to him than faith, and the Virgin Mary than her glorious Son.

At the age of twenty-two he was made doctor of philosophy, and his fellow-students in a torchlight procession celebrated the event. Encouraged by his successes, Luther resolved to climb the heights of learning, and, conscious of his power, no obstacle deterred him. Sordid motives urged him on. But God had something better in store for him and led him by a way he knew not. The assassination of his friend Alexis suggested a world to come, and a thunderstorm which overtook him on a country road led him to its borders. Then, deeply conscious of his sins, he bowed to the earth and covenanted to sacrifice his worldly ambition to the will of God. Soon after, surrendering all the hopes that had lured him on, he entered a convent and sought by fastings, watchings and prayers, by the most menial services as porter, sexton and servant of the cloister, and by the offices of a mendicant on the village streets, to secure divine favor and purchase eternal life. But the days grew darker, his load of sin heavier, and God seemed

to recede from him as the twilight which deepens into night. A faint gleam of light came to him with the words uttered in an adjoining cell, "I believe in the remission of sins," and the day dawned when John Staupitz pointed him to the wounds of Jesus as the only remedy for guilt. It was a sweet and ever-to-be-remembered hour when he felt on his bowed head the droppings of the cleansing blood, and caught the voice of infinite Love confirming his faith, saying, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee for thy Saviour's sake." Now Luther has learned that justification is by faith, not by works—that Christ saves, and he alone. The cross stands before him the most conspicuous object under the sun; beyond it a glorious heaven, and written across the overarching sky in characters of light the words of Paul: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus we observe the Reformation was born in the convent-cell. Erfurt became the Bethlehem of the Middle Ages.

This is the first period in the life of Luther. The miner's son is an accomplished scholar and a devout Christian, ready to enter broader fields and do a work which shall bless generations yet unborn.

The second period in Luther's eventful career, according to an accepted division, extends from 1507 to 1521, or to the Diet of Worms. After his conversion he was ordained a priest. The ceremony of induction into the sacerdotal office occurred May 2, 1507. John Luther, the father, was present, a sad observer, who regarded the transaction as a "snare of the devil." Jerome, bishop of Bradenburg, according to the usages of the Church, instituted Martin Luther a priest, and as he

put the chalice in Luther's hand repeated the blasphemous words: "Receive the power to offer sacrifice for the living and for the dead."

Soon the night began to close again about the youthful priest. He was discontented in his estate. Sin troubled him, and he knew not how to escape its power. Forgiveness needed to be continually sought, for he continually sinned. He often lingered at the altar, his tearful face turned toward heaven, pleading for pardon, and then, repairing to his cell, he spent even whole nights in prayer. All this while he was losing confidence in himself and learning more and more his need of Christ. Accustomed to rely on personal righteousness, self-sufficiency was tottering to its fall. He believed in justification by faith, but his convictions deepened. The morality which Aristotle taught, and which the Romish Church had substituted for the righteousness of Christ, grew more distasteful, and with a stronger faith he clung to the finished work of Christ. And yet he had learned only a partial gospel. He knew that Christ forgives sin, but Christ's relations to personal holiness were not clearly apprehended. He was passing through the lingering mists into the broader light. But even then he was far in advance of the prevailing sentiment of his times.

A little later, on an important embassy, Luther sets out for Rome. Still burdened in spirit, he exclaims, "There at length I shall find rest." There is the head of the Church, the successor of St. Peter. There is the Vatican with its great libraries. There are the goodly temples built of precious stones, adorned with all that art can devise and wealth purchase. There is the outer

court of heaven, where may be heard the footsteps of God and the whisperings of his love. Peace, sweet peace, shall soon fill the soul of the yet anxious priest.

But along the route he was amazed at the sins which defiled the Church's holiest shrines, and the spiritual blindness which ruled in high places. Surely it is not so, he thought, in the Eternal City. At length the journey is completed. Within the sacred walls, hard by the Tiber of which poets had sung, around him the great churches, the dome of St. Peter's towering above the remains of a classic age, Luther knelt and raising his eyes to heaven exclaimed, "Hail, holy Rome! made holy by the holy martyrs and by the blood which has here been spilt."

The Rome of the Scipios and Cæsars was in ruins. The mutilated Coliseum looked down on the Arch of Titus. But what matters this ruin since Christian Rome lives on, and at her altars are granted visions of the New Jerusalem which abideth for ever? How bitter was his disappointment! Peace is more remote than when from Wittenberg he set out on his journey hither. No ceremony, however gorgeous, avails anything. No penance brings God near; no humiliation amid the splendors of the sacred city purchases the holiness he craves. Climbing Pilate's Staircase on his knees, praying and weeping as in painfulness he goes up, he is more unhappy than before. But there, in a way he did not expect, he found the gate of heaven. A voice seeming to speak from out another world sweetly said, "The just shall live by faith." And as the morning clouds disappear and the shadows when the summer's sun comes up, so all his sadness vanished as the revelation of Christ the Sancti-

fier dawned upon him. Jesus pardons. Ah yes! and he also makes his people holy. He learned at last, what even little children born of God may know now, the fullness of the gospel of Christ. He learned what Paul had taught and men had believed before the Sun of righteousness had been obscured by the fogs and death-damps of Rome—that Jesus is all in all, the Author and Finisher of faith, made unto his own wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. And so Luther found in Rome the rest he sought, but God gave it, and not man. St. Peter's church, the Vatican, the imposing hierarchy, the magnificent ritual,—these still have a hold upon him, but the old power is waning. The sun of the Reformation has risen above the hills. From Rome, Luther returned to Wittenberg. Soon after, yielding to the united wish of Frederick, elector of Saxony, and John Staupitz, he was made “doctor of the Holy Scriptures,” and the insignia of his office were conferred upon him by Carlstadt at Leipzig in 1512.

Mark now the high resolve of Luther. Referring to the imposing ceremony in which was conveyed to him the highest dignity of the university, he says: “I then pledged myself to my well-beloved Scriptures to preach them faithfully, to teach them with purity, to study them all my life, and defend them both in disputation and in writing against all false teachers, so far as God should give me the ability.” That day Martin Luther put on his armor, turned his face to the foe and flung out the banner of his strength: “The word of God.” He thus took issue with Rome, exalting the sacred Scriptures, which were withheld from the people, as the only and infallible rule of faith and practice, infinitely supe-

rior to all the sophisms and theology of the schools. He accepted the Nazarene as his teacher rather than Aristotle or Thomas Aquinas, saying, "Within my heart reigns alone, and must reign alone, faith in my Lord Jesus Christ, who alone is the beginning, the middle and the end of my thoughts." He also announced the decadence of the old philosophies which, coming down to his day, had turned men from Christ. "Aristotle is declining; he is tottering toward his eternal ruin, which is near at hand." In a tour made in the interests of the cathedral at Wittenberg he impressed upon the monks at Dresden and Erfurt and in the long line of monasteries far as the forests of Thuringia, the great thought which possessed his own soul, the incomparable superiority of the divine word and the value of that fundamental doctrine which is the light and life of men—justification by faith. "Do not bind yourselves," he said, "to Aristotle or to any other teacher of a deceitful philosophy, but read the word of God with diligence. Do not look for salvation in your own strength or in your good works, but in the merits of Christ and in the grace of God."

He was thus unconsciously sowing the seeds of the Reformation. The convents of Germany were the moulders of religious thought, as they were the centres of learning, and whilst Luther was pressing an emancipated gospel upon their attention he was preparing them for the great strife with error. And when, by and by, the tocsin of holy war was sounded over the plains and among the mountains, there issued from hoary monasteries a multitude of stalwart men ready to lift high the standard of the cross and do battle for the truth. In the year 1516 the people at large caught their first



glimpse of the sun which betokened a glorious gospel day.

About this time Luther published his views on free will, in opposition to the theories of Pelagius, which made man the architect of his own destiny by ascribing to him the power resident in himself of loving God and doing good works, so casting discredit upon the office of the Holy Ghost. Luther said to men enslaved by sin, "You need true liberty, and God offers it to you in his gospel." He insisted that without grace there could be no work of love. Yet he set man between "two glories and two grandeurs"—a glory from which he has fallen, and a glory to which, through Christ, he may attain. This humiliation of man in his natural estate was not grateful to the carnal mind, and for a time the Reformer stood quite alone in his advocacy of what is so fundamental. Hope begins with hopelessness. When we cease to depend upon ourselves, God comes in the might of his power, not before.

Now we reach one of the most important epochs in the history of the Reformation. Leo X. occupied the pontifical throne. The great church which Michael Angelo had designed remained unfinished. It was proposed to make it what it now is, the most magnificent temple in the world. But the treasury must be replenished or St. Peter's church could not be completed. A modern historian has well said, "Leo had no Mexico to which he might have recourse. His mines were the old faith of the nations, their easy credulity." He had entrusted this mine in Germany to the Dominicans. The Council of Trent had declared that "the power to grant indulgences had been committed to the Church by Jesus



Christ, and the use of them is beneficial to salvation"—a blasphemous, mercenary doctrine which had borne its legitimate fruit in flagitious lives and eternal loss. Men had but to pay silver or gold ducats into the pope's treasury and then sin with impunity. Purgatorial fires ceased to alarm them. Or, if they had friends lingering in that world of flame, they might purchase their release and so hasten their passage into heaven.

At this time Albert, archbishop and elector of Mentz and of Magdeburg, was in need of money, and secured from Leo the privilege, as it was expressed, of "farming the sins of the Germans." Then John Tetzel, a man whose infamous life did not disqualify him for the service, was commissioned to conduct the traffic in indulgences. His assistants were Dominican monks. They rode in carriages and horsemen went on before them. When they approached a city they made their profane announcement, "The grace of God and of the Holy Father is at your gates." Then priests and people, great and small, hastened to meet them, and after humble salutations, the city bells ringing the mean while and all the avenues choking with excited throngs, the mighty pageant moved toward the cathedral or humbler church. Leo's bull of grace, supported by a gilded cushion, was borne in front; close behind it rode the monk Tetzel bearing a red cross, himself the very personification of vice and yet the messenger of the vicegerent of God. The procession with its attendant crowd entered the church, the great organ articulating the people's welcome and waving censers pouring their fragrance on the air. The chief of the Dominicans, elevating the cross and signaling for silence, addressed the crowd. **Hear what**

the mountebank says : "Indulgences are the most precious and the most noble of God's gifts. This cross has as much efficacy as the cross of Christ. Come and I will give you letters, all properly sealed, by which even the sins you intend to commit may be pardoned. But more than this : indulgences avail not only for the living, but for the dead. Do you not hear parents and friends cry from the bottom of the abyss, ' We are suffering horrible torments. A trifling alms would deliver us ; you can give it and you will not ' ?"

The monk's voice, clear and sonorous, sounds down the long aisles and fills the transepts. The people look wonderingly and inquiringly at one another. A moment's pause and the monk proceeds. The people disbelieve him, but he declares the Lord God no longer reigns, but has resigned all power to the pope, and, speaking in Leo's name, he solemnly swears that if they will heed the cry from the pit, "at the very instant the money rattles at the bottom of the chest the soul escapes from purgatory and flies liberated to heaven." Then he tells them the bodies of Peter and Paul and a multitude of holy martyrs are the sport of winds and storms within the unfinished walls of St. Peter's church, and their money will shelter them whilst it will secure the people a priceless good. Scenes like this are repeated as the weeks go on. The coffers of Leo and Albert are being filled whilst Tetzels roll in wealth, a greater gainer by this traffic in souls than they.

At length, Luther, taking counsel of God only, enters the arena, determined, if possible, to check this gigantic wrong. On All Saints' Day, as the people thronged the street leading to the church the elector had built, enriched

with relies Luther himself had gathered, the resolute Reformer pressed his way through the surging mass, and nailed to the door of the Wittenberg church his famous theses, which convulsed Central Europe and opened prison-doors, that the Church of the living God, weak and unhappy, might come forth. In these theses, ninety-five in all, he denies the power of the pope to forgive sins, and asserts that the hope of being saved by indulgences is a lying and empty hope. Within a month his theses had been printed and scattered through Christendom, and the world was astir. Luther was not prepared for this. He would gladly have stilled the tumult of the people and encouraged calmer thought. But this was beyond his power. He was helpless as Canute when the resistless sea laughed at his imperious edict and rolled on. God's power was working, and Rome trembled on the verge of disaster her impiety had evoked. Luther had thought to defeat Tetzels mission only, but he had struck the pontifical throne itself, and the war was transferred from Wittenberg to Rome. Then, too, the Reformer had directed attention to the grace of God which has provided salvation through Jesus Christ, and, though he knew it not, the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Soon he realized the power of truth. His pen which recorded it was mightier than the sword. The church-door at Wittenberg was the gateway of religious freedom, and through it marched the glorious King who shall reign in righteousness and give his people peace.

In this controversy Luther had the sympathies of some leading minds in Germany. This was notably true of John Reuchlin, the instructor of Melanchthon, who had risen from obscurity to great distinction, pronounced by

the Roman pontiff deserving of the highest rank among the orators of France and Italy. When he heard of Luther's opposition to Tetzels, alluding to the Dominican monks, he exclaimed, "Thanks be to God! At length they have found a man who will give them so much to do that they will be compelled to let my old age end in peace."

Luther also had the support of Erasmus, the sage of Rotterdam, a man of great learning, but of mercurial temperament, who lacked the elements of a Reformer, yet prepared the way for a work which men of sterner stuff were summoned to perform. He had expressed in burning sarcasm his judgment of the teachings and practices of Rome. The monks feared and hated him. The scholars of the age revered him. He agreed with Luther that in theology the teachings of Scotus and Aquinas should never be accepted when in conflict with those of Christ and his apostles. His Greek Testament displaced the Vulgate, which abounded in errors, and in various ways his learning advanced the truth. He applauded the theses which Luther had given to the world, and yet declared "a disadvantageous peace to be better than the most righteous war."

On the other hand, the Reformer encountered the opposition of influential scholars, and the lines of separation were being more closely drawn. Among these scholars may be mentioned Prierio, a Dominican; Hochstraten of Cologne; and Eck, the learned professor of Ingolstadt, who arrayed the Schoolmen against the incipient Reformation.

In the early part of 1518 a general chapter of Augustine monks inimical to the Reformation was held at

Heidelberg, and Luther, as one of its most distinguished members, was summoned thither. Timid friends discouraged his attendance, but, trusting in God, he entered on the dangerous journey. Part of the passage was made on foot. Dust-covered and footsore he entered Wurtzburg. There he met John Staupitz and Lange, the prior of Erfurt, and joining them in their carriage a three days' journey brought them to Heidelberg and to the shelter of the Augustinian convent. After a brief rest they repaired to the castle, but pleasant companionship could not divert Luther from the great work before him. A public disputation was announced to occur in the chapel of the Augustinian monastery, and multitudes flocked thither to see and hear the man whose fame had already become a household word. Here he dwelt on his favorite theme, justification by faith. He was opposed by five learned doctors, but his appeal was to the word of God. Again he opposed Christ to Aristotle, and defended his position with the sword of the Spirit. His utterances, in a voice of great sweetness, were clear, positive and strangely eloquent. Some of his audience said, "He is in many respects like Erasmus, but surpasses him in one thing: he openly professes what Erasmus is content merely to insinuate." Salvation through Christ was not an unwelcome truth to many. The spiritual cross rose to their view. Jesus the Sin-bearer, the Lord our righteousness, was a great sight to men who had groped among old philosophies and bowed at the feet of the popes. A light is being kindled in Heidelberg which shall climb the hoary mountains around it—that shall shine far over Europe and reveal to many who are now lost the way to God.

There were present three young men whose eyes were fixed on the bold defender of the faith once delivered to the saints. They were stirred by his eloquence and deeply affected by the truth. They are even now girding themselves for the strife in which this Augustinian monk shall lead the way. Their names are familiar—Martin Bucer, John Brentz and Ehrhard Snepf. They repeated Luther's words when he was gone. Their influence spread throughout Saxony and beyond the English Channel. Jesus is preached with power, and the truth is marching in its strength over prostrate superstitions. Meanwhile Leo X. is looking on. From his pontifical chair he hears the sound of moving feet and preparations for religious war. At first he thought lightly of the controversy which he referred to monkish jealousies. Luther had spoken well of the pope even when nailing his theses on the church-door at Wittenberg, and thought him superior to the age. But returning from Heidelberg, he passed a different judgment on the character and life of the Florentine Medici. His regard for the papal tiara ceased. "I care nothing," he said, "for what pleases or displeases the pope." Leo's teachings were thereafter tested by the word of God. Christ only is infallible. His cross alone points the way to heaven. His commandments are the only rule of life. Then Luther declared the need of a reformation—not man's work, but God's. The time was at hand. The Church was beginning to awake. "The dike," he says, "is broken, and it is no longer in our power to restrain the impetuous and overwhelming billows." The sun is going toward the zenith. The floods of light are driving away the mists of darkness. "The German people,"



says D'Aubigné, "had heard the voice of the Reformer. The people turned toward him and saluted him with love and respect as the intrepid defender of truth and liberty. If the eloquence of Peter, the hermit of St. Bernard, had inspired the people of the Middle Ages to assume a perishable cross, the eloquence of Luther prevailed on those of his day to take up the real cross, the truth which saves."

We cannot speak at length of the Diet at Augsburg ; the charges preferred against Luther, friar of the Augustinian order ; an appeal to the pope to put an end to his pernicious teachings ; Luther's summons, and his subsequent appearance at Augsburg instead ; his mock trial before De Vio, surnamed Cajetan ; and the humiliation which came to Rome, Serra Longa and the Italians, enraged because they were confounded by a German monk, and the wrath of Leo when the tidings reached the Vatican, which the Augustinian had defied.

Luther took his departure from Augsburg, and hastened his flight from the hands which sought his blood. It seemed that his expulsion from Germany was only a question of time, and his face was turned toward France. Seated with some friends at a farewell repast, he received a letter from the elector. He opened it, read with trembling, and the way grew dark before him. His fears are well grounded. The prince asks why he delays his departure. Luther lifts his tearful eyes toward heaven and says, "Father and mother abandon me, but the Lord takes me up." Then he waited for the Roman anathemas which were doubtless traveling northward, but meanwhile drew up a protest against the assumptions of Rome, and then appealed to a general council as "the



only means of safety against that injustice which it was impossible to resist.

Subsequently, Leo X. issued his famous damnatory bull, in which he condemns as heretical many writings of the Augustinian monk, forbids the reading of the same on pain of excommunication, and threatens, in case Luther does not recant, to deliver him unto Satan for the destruction of his flesh, and so he with all who aid him in his heretical course shall be for ever accursed. The time had been when the crowned heads of Europe would have trembled before the threatenings of Rome, but now they are wholly disregarded by the brave Reformer. He went calmly on in his work and committed his life, his soul, his all to Christ. As Jerome and Augustine had been alone, so was Luther. "Yes, I am alone," he said, "but I stand serene, because side by side with me is the Lord God; and with all their boasted numbers this the greatest of powers is not with them."

The last tie that bound Martin Luther to Rome is about to be sundered. The Reformation is being launched on the broad waters. The gallant ship has a cross for its floating pennon, the name of Christ is written on its sails, a multitude are on board, their destiny is a quiet haven, and beyond it is a city undefiled.



LUTHER AT LEIPSIC AND THE DIET OF  
WORMS.

*"And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak : for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak."*

MATT. 10 : 18, 19.

*"As the providence of God doth, in general, reach to all creatures ; so, after a most special manner, it taketh care of his Church, and disposeth all things to the good thereof."*

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. V. SEC. vii.

*"Here I stand ; I can do no other. May God help me ! Amen."*

LUTHER.

## LUTHER AT LEIPSIC AND THE DIET OF WORMS.

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THE Augustinian monk is turning the world upside down. Nations are in commotion. The waves of the theological strife are beginning to smite the pontifical throne. Evidently something must be done, and done speedily, or Rome will suffer contempt, and perchance far greater disaster. It is decided to conciliate the elector of Saxony, who seems friendly to this revolutionary monk, and through him win back the allegiance of the wavering or disaffected. Frederick has not broken with the Church. It is remembered that four years previously he had solicited the pope to grant him the Golden Rose, a beautiful flower, an emblem of Christ's body, which had been often consecrated by the papal benediction. Accordingly, the pope's chamberlain, a Saxon noble named Miltitz, was commissioned to visit Frederick and convey to him this valued expression of his pontiff's regard.

As the chamberlain traveled northward he was increasingly impressed with the seriousness of the situation. Many in Germany, including monks and representative men of state, applaud Luther's work and bid it God-speed. Miltitz's mission is variously interpreted. In the judgment of some Luther's life is in peril. He may

burn as did John Huss and Jerome of Prague. The brave Reformer simply answers, "I await God's will."

The death of Maximilian and the temporary administration of the German empire by Frederick, and a variety of political troubles which supervened, were all favorable to the Reformation. Attention was diverted from Luther and the threatening storm was held in abeyance.

Then, too, the representative of Rome finds that Tetzel has fallen into disrepute. His traffic in indulgences has roused the indignation of Germany, and Miltitz is compelled to denounce the blasphemous Dominican or himself suffer inglorious defeat. He cowered before the enemies of Rome, who, as he judged, without reason were resolved to compass his death. The college of St. Paul at Leipsic is his retreat, but is not an impregnable defence. The papal nuncio is humiliated, and changes his policy even toward Luther himself. Hear him, as with an assumed tenderness he addresses the German monk: "My dear Martin, I thought you were an old theologian who, seated quietly at his fireside, was laboring under some theological crotchet, but I see you are still a young man and in the prime of life." Then dropping his voice and speaking in solemn tones, he added: "Do you know that you have drawn away everybody from the pope and attached them to yourself? If I had an army of twenty five thousand men, I do not think I should be able to carry you to Rome."

The nuncio was right. Luther is the master and Miltitz the crouching vassal. The German monk is mightier, even now, in this land of the Saxons, than the hierarchy the chamberlain represents. And yet, strange

as it may seem to us now, Luther clings to the Church. He would not destroy, but purge it. With a holy boldness that fears not the stake or the sword he denounces its corruption and demands reform. But he would work within the Church, not beyond it. Hence he expresses to the nuncio his regard for the Holy Father, and his unwillingness to disturb the peace except when the vindication of the truth requires it. He would be a faithful son of the Church, but he would have it understood that his first allegiance is to Christ, the only supreme Head thereof. Miltitz contents himself with the concession thus made, for it is evident he cannot secure more. An agreement is entered into by which Luther promises to retract anything offensive to Rome which should be shown him to be inconsistent with the truth. The chamberlain appeared to be deeply affected. He embraced and kissed the recreant monk, and the latter returned a grim smile, understanding, better than was supposed, the artifice of the wily Italian. The latter on a Carnival occasion which followed, having drunk too freely of the flowing cup, was thrown off his guard, and discoursed freely of the sinful practices and decaying power of the papal Church, so putting weapons into the Reformer's hands by which to smite the evil that resisted the truth. The result of all this was the advancement of the Reformation in the land of Luther and the humiliation of the Roman See. The monk has the boldness to write to Leo that whilst he loves the Church, he loves Jesus Christ more, for he alone is Lord of all.

Meanwhile the Golden Rose is detained at Augsburg. Frederick stood side by side with Luther. Miltitz and De Vio are enraged. The truth is not deflected from its



course. Its chariot, yoked to the sun, travels on. Neither frowns nor flatteries, gifts nor gibbets, can defeat the purposes of God.

A new triumph awaits the Reformation at Leipsic. The eyes of Germany have been turned thither. One of Rome's strongest polemics purposes to measure swords with its most stalwart enemies. Carlstadt accepts the challenge. Eck prepares for the disputation, hoping to meet and vanquish a mightier foe. He will plant himself on the prostrate body of Carlstadt, and then contend with Luther, a champion more worthy of his steel. Who ever met this mighty Eck on the open field and prevailed against him? Luther's friends cannot disguise their fears. If other means fail to overcome this fearless monk, violence may end his career. Burnt in effigy in the Campus di Fiore at Rome, he may burn in person on the streets of Leipsic or perish on the banks of the Tiber. Luther alone is calm, trusting in God.

It is the day succeeding the festival of the Corpus Christi. We are standing at the Grimma Gate. A procession is passing through. Carlstadt appears first in his carriage, riding alone. Luther and Melanchthon, sitting side by side, follow. After these come Lange, vicar of the Augustinians, Nicholas Arnsdorff and many learned men who have espoused Luther's cause, and two hundred Wittenberg students who are eager to witness the fray. The imposing pageant moves slowly on and approaches the gates of St. Paul's cemetery, whilst the whole city is excited by the scene.

The day following one of the largest halls in the palace of Duke George is occupied by an anxious throng. The disputants are in their places. The great assembly,

like a field of corn over which the summer's wind passes, bow their heads, and, kneeling, sing the invocation hymn, "Holy Spirit, come." I doubt not heaven was looking on. Invisible angels on poised wings await a resurrection such as that on which the first Easter morning looked down. Hell too was moving from beneath. It was an impressive and ever-memorable hour in the history of the Church.

Look at the central figures in this ecclesiastical drama. Eck stands among them, in stature like Saul among the Israelites—muscular, self-reliant, defiant. His voice is like the storm, his speech is rude, his gestures are devoid of grace. With a memory which seldom fails him he speaks without manuscript or notes, and when logic limps vociferates the louder, so holding his power over many with whom noise and truth are interchangeable terms.

Carlstadt is a man of small stature and dark visage. His voice is attenuated and his presence weak, though in thought he is superior to his scornful opponent.

Luther is of medium stature, pale and emaciated, with firm yet benignant countenance, evidently weighed down by the responsibilities the occasion brings, his voice clear, sweet and commanding, his arguments a resistless flood, his earnestness a consuming fire and his moral courage the miracle of the age.

Beside him is Philip Melancthon, in appearance child-like as Jesse's youngest son when Samuel anointed him king, gentle as a woman and mild in speech, yet possessed of an acute mind and great learning, without whom the rugged Luther could not have carried to a happy issue the conflict with Rome.

For four days Eck and Carlstadt disputed concerning free will and sovereign grace. The former magnified human ability; the latter referred conversion, with that consent of the will which marks its latter stage, wholly to the grace of God. The evangelical theories of Carlstadt were humiliating to human pride; the carnal heart opposed them.

The sentiment of the people was with Eck. Great excitement extended throughout Leipsic. Angry words were succeeded by violent blows. In public resorts the discussions were more excited than in the hall of the duke's palace. Many pronounced Luther a devil or a man in league with the devil, and Carlstadt was almost forgotten in the wrath which his greater associates had awakened.

Then Luther became prominent in the disputation. In answer to Eck's assumption that the pope was the head of the Church, he affirmed on the testimony of God's word that Jesus Christ was the Head, and not man. "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." "Let us not listen," said Luther, "to those who banish Christ to the Church triumphant in heaven." He admitted that the people might elect the pope chief magistrate of the Church, but he could not be such by divine right. To this Eck replied that he would prove the primacy of the pope a divine right by the words of Christ: "Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build my Church;" and he quoted Augustine in support of his position. But Luther appealed from Augustine's early interpretation of that word to his maturer judgment, and repeated the saying of Paul, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is

laid, which is Jesus Christ." Eck resorted to ridicule, but Luther stood calmly on the word of God. He did not even hesitate to declare his sympathy with the teachings of the despised Bohemian who was burned at Constance, for John Huss sustained his positions not by the decrees of councils, but by the Holy Scriptures. Thus Luther struck at the throne of Leo and preferred Christ to Rome.

We cannot dwell upon other questions of dispute, such as repentance and absolution of the priest and indulgences. For twenty days the disputation had engaged profound attention. Again the great organ was heard. The *Te Deum* was sung. The discussion at Leipsic was ended. Mossellams gave it as his judgment that the ignorant, who had grown gray under the old Schoolmen, were with Eck, "but Luther and Carlstadt," he said, "are victorious in the opinion of those who possess any learning, understanding and modesty." Luther and Melanchthon left the hall arm in arm, before them a battlefield bounded by the great seas and around them the chariots of the Lord and the horsemen thereof.

I have dwelt upon this chapter of the Reformation because it marks Luther's separation from Rome. This step, as we have seen, was not hastily taken. The Augustinian monk had hoped to remain in the Church which had grown hoary with years, the Church which had built St. Peter's and the Vatican, which had commanded the allegiance of empires and the homage of kings, the papal tiara flashing with jewels, and the chair of St. Peter's a grander throne than that of the Cæsar called the Great. But Luther saw at last that the interests of the truth required a separation from

Rome, and the decisive step was taken. He afterward referred with great charity to those who sympathized with his views, yet lingered behind. "I no longer permit myself to be indignant against those who are still attached to the pope, since I, who had for so many years studied the Holy Scriptures, still clung with so much obstinacy to him."

Now equally decisive action must be taken by the pope. A German monk who defies the mighty hierarchy of Rome must be anathematized. The Church demands it; the universities of Cologne and Louvain declare it a necessity. George of Saxony insists that the Hussite should be condemned. At the same time, strong arms encircled the Reformer, and voices of love bade him be strong in the Lord. Erasmus, with characteristic timidity, hid from the gathering storm. He was a Plato among his books rather than a Socrates on the open field. Ulrich von Hutten and Franz von Sickingen, true men and noble, united in support of the Reformation. The latter pointed Luther to his strong castle, the gate of which stood ajar, and assured him that there, guarded by the high walls and the swords of hundreds of nobles, Sylvester von Schaumburg at their head, the Reformer would be secure from the hordes of Rome. Then Luther, looking heavenward, said, "God give us all a Christian understanding, and especially to the Christian nobles of the German nation a right spirited courage to do the very best for our poor Church! Amen."

Again the blustering Eek appeared on the scene. He came from Rome with the papal bull. The man whom he could not vanquish at Leipsic must go down before

the fulmination of the pontifical throne. The bull of excommunication is published in Wittenberg. Luther's writings are condemned to the flames. All intercourse with the arch-heretic is forbidden. The loyal sons of Rome are exhorted to secure the person of the Hussite and convey him to the Holy City. The stake is evidently erected, the fagots are gathered and the torch is aflame. "Cursed," says Leo, "be the man who asserts that to burn heretics is a sin against the Holy Ghost."

What does Luther care for the impotent ravings of Leo X., or Germany care for the Italian bull? Leipsic is amazed at Eck, and for his security the monastery of St. Paul opens its gates. Erfurt, too, derides this servant of the pope, gathers copies of the papal bull and casts them into the river which flows by the town. But in Cologne, Mayence and Louvain the bull is triumphant, and the books of the heretic ascend in the flames. Standing between his friends and his foes, Luther maintains a calm demeanor, trusting in Him who controls the wrath of men and turns their hearts as the streams in the south. On the 10th of November he announced that the pope's bull of excommunication and the papal books of canonical law would be burned on the following day at the Elster Gate. A multitude of students and citizens assembled at the designated time and place. The fire was kindled, and Luther cast the bull and the Roman decretals into it, saying, "Because thou hast offended the Holy One of the Lord, be thou consumed with everlasting fire." The smoke of the holocaust melted away in the sky and the sun looked approvingly down.

On the 29th of March, 1521, Caspar Sturm of Oppen-



heim arrived in Wittenberg and presented to Luther a summons from the emperor Charles V. to appear before him at Worms within twenty-one days, unwillingly promising him, at Frederick's request, a safe-conduct thither. At once Luther prepared himself for the journey. He believed that death awaited him. For Christ and the truth's sake he was ready to die. His friends provided him a simple conveyance, with a cover to shield him from sun and storm. He entered it with a firm step and a resolute heart. Before him rode the imperial herald seated on a royal steed. Beside him in the carriage were his loyal friends Shurff, Arnsdorff and Swaren. All around him on the road were the students and citizens of Wittenberg who had espoused the Reformation, and, invoking God's protection for the great man whom they loved as their own souls, they wept aloud as did the elders of Ephesus when they parted from their beloved Paul, sorrowing most of all that, as they believed, they should see his face no more. Well has it been said, "There is nothing in sacred or profane history grander than the self-immolation of this German monk."

Luther bade his friends a tender farewell, and in a voice trembling with emotion urged his dear Melancthon to stand fast in the truth. The imperial herald rode on, and Luther followed. Soon the walls and spires of Wittenberg grew dim and disappeared. Luther's purpose did not waver. Leipsic greeted him as he passed, Naumberg extended its hospitality to him, Weimar sheltered him for a night; John Crotus, Hessus and Justus Jonas, all men of royal names, accompanied by forty horsemen rode out to meet him on the road to



Erfurt, then conducted him with royal honors into the city and to the old convent Luther knew and loved, where John Lange, the prior, gave him an affectionate welcome. At Eisenach—there was no dearer spot along the way—he tarried a little, memories of the olden time crowding upon him, and down his manly face tears ran as he stood under the window of his beloved Cotta. Tortured with pains to which he was often subject, he passed through Frankfort-on-the-Main, whence he sent this message to a friend: “Christ lives, and I will go to Worms to brave the gates of hell and the powers of the air.”

When approaching Worms he received a message from his friend Spalatin urging him not to imperil his life by entering the city, to which Luther replied in words which generations have repeated: “To Worms I was called, and to Worms I must go. And were there as many devils there as there are tiles upon the roofs, yet would I enter that city.” Then there came an invitation from Sickingen to come to his castle at Ebernburg, where he might transact with the emperor through his confessor. But the monk was firm: “Not to Ebernburg, but to Worms, have I been summoned. If the imperial confessor have aught to say to me, let him seek me there.”

On the morning of the 16th of April, 1521, a watchman on the cathedral-tower at Worms, looking northward, saw an unusual procession approaching the city. An imperial herald led it; close behind was a monk apparently guarded by friends. Just beyond the city-walls was a great company of horsemen riding hurriedly outward to meet the approaching cavalcade. Across the

intervening space a single voice, clear and trustful, was heard singing a German hymn, the Marseillaise of the Reformation :

“ Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.”

At length the city-gate is reached ; crowds are there, men, women and children. Some stand on tiptoe ; others, Zaccheus-like, climb on the walls or look from the windows. “ That is Luther,” says one and another, and hundreds of eyes are fixed on the monk who dares to confront the emperor and the imperial diet. Down the choked streets the procession moved. Leffer, the Bavarian clown, holding a lighted taper in one hand, in the other a cross, repeated the words : “ *Ecce advenit quem expectamus in tenebris* ” (“ Behold he comes whom, in the darkness, we have waited for ”). It was intended as a sarcasm, but it was well said by Friar Luther’s friends, “ Children and fools tell the truth.” The procession stopped in front of the mansion of the Knights of St. John. As Luther stepped from his carriage to the ground he said, “ God will be with me.”

The following morning he received an official citation to appear before Emperor Charles and the imperial diet. At four o’clock the marshal of the empire notified him that his presence was immediately required. For a little Luther was disturbed. A humble monk, with few friends and they comparatively weak, was to appear before the most solemn tribunal in all the world. The imperial herald led the way ; the marshal of the empire followed ; Luther came last. The streets were even more crowded than on the preceding day. Advance seemed impossible. Then through private dwellings

and contiguous gardens the Reformer was conducted to the public hall. The passage was filled. Thousands had anticipated the monk's arrival. As the latter pressed his way through the crowd an old soldier, who afterward became renowned for his prowess on the battle-ground of Pavia, laid his hand on Luther's shoulder and said with deep emotion, "Poor monk ! poor monk ! thou art now going to make a nobler stand than I or any other captain have ever made on the bloodiest field. But if thy cause is just and thou art sure of it, go forward in God's name and fear nothing. God will not forsake thee."

How imposing the sight which now meets the Reformer's eyes ! The youthful emperor in imperial robes occupies the august throne. Gathered about him are electors, dukes, margraves, archbishops, bishops, abbots, ambassadors from foreign courts, princes, counts and noble barons, and before them the heretic stands alone. This, remember, is the monk whom Leo has cut off from the Holy Church and remanded to seclusion and silence. But here he stands as did Paul before the most noble Festus, to speak for himself, and crowned heads shall listen. The diet at Worms exalts itself above the pope. The appeal is taken from Leo X. to this German council. The holy pontiff is smitten as with palsy, and, though to some the Reformation seems on the verge of disaster, it is, in fact, marching grandly on.

The monk remains motionless and silent before the imperial throne. The assembly is solemn as eternity itself. Not a sound is heard. Presently the archbishop of Treves, John ab Eck, not the turgid orator of Leipsic, breaks the silence : " Martin Luther, his sacred and in-

vincible imperial majesty has cited you before his throne, in accordance with the councils of the states of the Holy Roman Empire, to require you to answer two questions: First. Do you acknowledge these books to have been written by you? Second. Are you prepared to retract these books and their contents, or do you persist in the opinions you have advanced?" Luther glanced at the volumes which covered a table near by, the titles of which had been read by demand of one of his friends, and made answer, "Most gracious emperor! gracious princes and lords! His Imperial Majesty has asked me two questions. As to the first I acknowledge as mine the books that he has just named: I cannot (if unchanged) deny them. As to the second, I entreat Your Imperial Majesty, with all humility, to allow me time that I may answer without offending against the word of God." The delay was granted, and the imperial herald conducted Luther to his lodging. He was wont to be much alone with God. In this solemn transaction he is consciously weak and needy. He carries all to Him who is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Again and again he cries, "Faithful and unchangeable God, help me! For the sake of thy well-beloved Son, who is my defence, my shield and my strong tower, help me! Amen. Amen." He is pleading not so much for himself as for his beloved Germany and for the world, reminding us of the prayer of John Knox, the garden-prayer which the midnight bore to heaven: "O God, give me Scotland or I die!" From the secret place of prayer the Reformer came forth clad in heavenly armor, calm and hopeful.

The following day at four o'clock Luther was again

conducted to the diet chamber. For two hours he was detained at the entrance, around him a surging, excited throng. At last the doors were opened. In the flickering lights all objects appeared weird and solemn. There was something strangely ominous in the hour. Did it portend victory for Rome or defeat? As we look at the sun of the Reformation half hidden behind the bare and rugged hills, we raise the question, "Is it a rising or a setting sun?"

John ab Eck rises in his place, and so also the Wittenberg monk. The questions of the previous day were repeated, and Luther replied wisely. He said the books displayed before him were his. As to retracting those, he replied at much length. His argument was ingenious, honest and to many convincing. He could not retract what even Rome did not condemn. Many of his writings were approved by Leo and in harmony with the ancient faith. Other books he knew were distasteful to the Church. He had endeavored in them to honor Christ, to exalt a spiritual cross, to magnify the doctrine which now is sweet to all enlightened believers, the doctrine of justification by faith, and to point men the way to heaven. He rested every statement conscientiously—and, as he hoped, intelligently—upon the word of God. Then he continued: "I cannot submit my faith either to the pope or to councils, because it is clear as the day that they have often erred. Unless, therefore, I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture or by the clearest reasoning, *I cannot* and *I will not* retract. Here I stand; I can do no other. May God help me! Amen." What a scene was that! What strange words were those! The inspiration of Heaven was in the hour and in that noble tes-

timony for the truth. How grandly the Wittenberg monk stands forth on that solemn battle-ground, a mightier than Leonidas in the mountain-pass! Emperors, electors, dukes and representatives of Rome look wrathfully down, thirsting for his blood, and the monk whom they stigmatize as a Bohemian recalls the trial in the old münster at Constance on the Rhine, when Sigismund and Hallam sat in the mock trial, and John Huss was sent forth with the maledictions of the so-called vicar of Christ on his head to burn on the clover-field beyond the city-gate. But Luther is calm, and he only is. God is with him; truth is on his side. Heaven, with its sweet peace, awaits him beyond the conflicts of this soon-to-be-ended life.

Aleander, the advocate of Rome, whose eloquence papal historians have exalted, whose defence of Leo's damnatory bull secured him the gratitude of a corrupt Church, whose efforts to secure Luther's condemnation had been aided by the bribes Julius de Medicis had sent from Rome, was deeply humiliated by the monk's signal triumph, and would gladly have committed the latter to the flames, so stifling the Reformation at its birth. But the elector of Saxony was on Luther's side. Cautious and calm, he advanced with a measured but resolute step, and with him were many leading men in Church and State, seeking only the interests of truth at any cost. The power of the pope was broken. Minds long fettered by papal decretals were casting off their chains. Dry bones in the valley of vision were astir, fellow meeting its fellow, and a mighty army clad in the panoply of heaven was ready to spring to its feet and fight for the faith Paul preached



and in which apostles died. "The day of the diet of Worms," said Philip Melancthon, "is one of the greatest and most glorious days given to the earth before the end of the world."

France caught the beams of the rising sun. England saw the advancing light beyond the Channel. Italy sought the shadow of the pontifical throne, wondering what the issue would be.

But the days of Luther's safe-conduct are passing and his departure must be hastened. On the 26th of April he left his lodgings, having committed himself and his cause to the care of God. Accursed of the Church, condemned by the emperor, his books burning on the streets of Worms and enemies seeking his life, he walked calmly forth, entered his carriage and preceded, as when he came, by the imperial herald, surrounded by horsemen and crowds of sympathizing friends or jeering foes, he passed out the northern gate. For the present his person is comparatively safe, for Charles dare not break his royal word. But he has decreed the seizure of the heretic at the end of the safe-conduct, purposing to terminate the Reformation by the banishment or death of the defiant monk. The cavalcade journeyed northward. At Friedberg, Luther wrote to the emperor and the states assembled at Worms, addressing both in respectful terms, but reminding them that God and his word were above principalities and powers. These letters he gave to the imperial herald, and permitted him to return to his master, preferring to pursue his journey without the stipulated protection. A mile from Hirschfeldt the chancellor of the monastery, accompanied by a troop of cavaliers despatched



by the abbot Milius, met Luther and escorted him into the city and, regardless of the imperial edict which forbade the excommunicated monk to preach, the walls of the old monastery reverberated with the words of life, the abbot and monks receiving the truth with joy. Again, at his dear Eisenach, he told the story of redeeming love, and although some opposed him on mere prudential grounds, it was quite evident that the most who heard him, turning their backs on Leo, were ready to crown Jesus Lord of all.

Now Luther and his attendants are entering the Thuringian Forest. Heavy shadows stretch across the road. The winds are sighing among the trees. Nature in its sober mood hushes the voices of the travelers as they ride thoughtfully on. Suddenly horsemen armed and masked issue from the woods. Luther's companions leap to the ground and disappear in the depths of the forest. Luther himself, scarcely realizing what is being done, is seized by the horsemen, who throw around him a military cloak and then bear him away through the darkness, along a circuitous path and up a steep mountain-slope, coming at last to an old castle named the Wartburg, standing silent and grim in the depths of the forest on a lonely height. The draw-bridge is lowered, and Luther crosses it. The gates are opened, then closed behind him. The monk is a prisoner. But friendly hands have brought him hither. Frederick the elector has thus secured him from violence, and none dares whisper the secret, for Charles and Leo will scour the land if haply they may find the heretic and make him lick the dust.

Here for a little we leave the hero of our story,

Knight George, the name by which Wartburg knows him, the garb of a monk exchanged for a soldier's dress. God has cared for Luther. In the diet of Worms he stood alone; yet not alone, for God was with him. And as he looked upon the serried host led on by Emperor Charles and Pope Leo in the might of state and ecclesiastical power, with eyes aflame and weapons set, urged on by prejudice, lust and hate, bearing down upon him, a lone Augustinian monk, he could say with Paul, "None of these things move me," and with Elisha at Dothan, "They that be with me are more than they that be with them."

The pope, the stirrup of whose saddle emperors had held as he vaulted into his seat, whose jeweled slipper crowned heads had kissed, before whose anathemas thrones had tottered, cannot touch without God's permission even a hair of Luther's head; and until his work is finished the monk is immortal as his Lord, though a thousand fall at his side and ten thousand at his right hand.

We admire the faith that walked calmly into the very jaws of death. We find the interpretation of it in the secret place of prayer—the hours creeping on, the night deepening, the gray dawn climbing the eastern sky, and Luther on his knees clasping an omnipotent hand and walking among invisible worlds. With passions such as ours, with temptations such as girt us around, with a will and temper that were often a snare, he triumphed over external foes and foes within, and grandly triumphed, fearing nothing so much as sin, hating nothing so much as a lie, and longing for nothing so much as the world's salvation through the cross; and

when God commanded it was his to do and, if need be, die.

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“What! shall one monk, scarce known beyond his cell,  
Front Rome’s far-reaching bolts, and scorn her frown?  
Brave Luther answered, ‘Yes;’ that thunder swell  
Rocked Europe, and discharged the triple crown.”

LUTHER'S LAST DAYS.

*“ As much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.”*

ROM. 1 : 15.

*“ Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

ROM. 5 : 1.

*“ The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself, which he through the eternal Spirit once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father ; and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him.”*

CON. FAITH, CHAP. vii. SEC. V.

*“ I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”*

2 TIM. 4 : 7.

## LUTHER'S LAST DAYS.

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GOD is in all history, sacred and profane. His providence is illustrated by every page of the Pentateuch, in the books of the Kings and in the Acts of the Apostles. It is none the less conspicuous in the history of the Augustan age, the Peloponnesian War, and the great Reformation. Useful lessons may be drawn from these sources. And especially does the recovery of gospel truth, with the instrumentalities by which this was achieved and the incidents which marked its progress, claim our devout and grateful study.

God was with Luther as certainly as he was with Paul. By human agencies he originated the apostolic Church, and by like instrumentalities he restored it. Although Luther was an uninspired man and added nothing to the sacred canon, yet he wrought under the divine direction and was supported by divine power. Hence all that pertains to his life and work is of interest to the Christian. We resume our studies of the Reformation and our observation of Luther in the hope of knowing God better and of being more firmly established in gospel truth.

In the judgment of many historians the interest in the life of Martin Luther culminated at the diet of Worms. At no period perhaps does he appear to a greater advantage or impress the world more profoundly

as a polemic and moral hero, a giant among men, called of God to the greatest work of these latter ages. He stands before us as some mountain-height which, towering above the lower peaks, pierces the clouds and is lost to sight.

But although the subsequent career of Luther contains less that is impressively heroic and furnishes fewer occasions for his impetuous eloquence, yet it is marked with even greater and more beneficent results. The mountain-torrent, which in its descent swept everything before it and startled vast solitudes with its roar, flows quietly through plains, and in its progress is less observed, but more useful, irrigating great spaces, quenching the thirst of men and of lowing herds, bearing on its bosom the traffic of empires, whilst great cities line its shores. So the more rugged features of Luther's character are displaced by the serener elements which beautify a peaceful domesticity and enrich the life of a resuscitated Church.

We resume our narrative with the Reformer's sudden disappearance after the diet of Worms. Germany inquires for him, but no answer is given. When last seen he was entering the forests of Thuringia. Since then no tidings of him have reached any city or hamlet of the land. It is known that the period of his safe-conduct was at an end when he disappeared in that solemn wood. Violent hands, say many, have no doubt terminated his life. Even Wartburg furnishes no solution to the painful mystery, for, so far as is known to the keepers of the old castle, Luther has not passed that way. The grief of his friends is great. A light which had risen on the horizon of their darkness has suddenly dropped behind



the hills, and a profounder night has come. What shall the future of Germany be? By whom shall the Church arise? The enemies of the Reformer are alarmed. Leo fears the worst. An avalanche of wrath may descend from the North and bury the papal throne. The archbishop of Mayence is startled by a message from a faithful papist: "I fear that we shall scarce escape with our lives if we do not everywhere seek him (Luther) with lanterns and call him back again."

Luther is safe at Wartburg. Friendly hands bore him thither. He enjoys for the time the seclusion of the castle. Worn by the excitement incident to the diet at Worms and the dangerous journey which followed it, he rests quietly in the old fortress or walks unmolested along the avenues of the contiguous woods. From the "region of air and bird-songs," as he describes the Wartburg, "where birds from their homes in the trees do continually praise God; from the isle of Patmos," he looks across the great battlefield whence he has come, and sweetly sings, in harmony with the voices of the wood, his favorite psalm, "The Lord is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

But Luther's imagination, fruitful as Bunyan's in a later day, began to people the cell of his prison with evil spirits summoned from the invisible world. Charles and John ab Eck and Aleander do not intrude upon his privacy and have no power to disturb or destroy, but the Prince of the air and subordinate spirits crowd the stairways, whisper their jibes along the corridors, and even force their way through solid walls that they may buffet and torment the worn and weary exile. The physical reaction which succeeded the conflict at Worms, and

the attendant exhaustion of mental power, may furnish at least a partial explanation for the hallucinations which entered his prison-life. Then, too, he was not released from the superstitions which marked the age, to the power of which he was a ready prey. On a day ever memorable to him—if the story is true—when busied with his translation of the New Testament, the devil entered the room and attempted to wrest the manuscript from Luther's grasp. The spirit of the latter was roused, and he hurled his ink-bottle at his hateful foe. The flying missile seemed to penetrate the spectre and smote the wall. To-day the visitor in the Wartburg Castle is shown an indentation on the wall, vandal hands having removed the plastered surface which bore the traces of the effective weapon.

Relieved of future interruption from this source, he completed his translation of the New Testament. Rome had withheld the word of God from the people; Luther longed to give it to them. Knowledge is life; ignorance, death. He rejoiced in the prospect of scattering far and wide the leaves he had plucked from the tree of revelation, and hoped to advance the Reformation by these more rapidly than by the words he had spoken.

He also wrote his comments on the Gospels and the Epistles for Sundays and festival days, and prepared a vigorous philippic "Against the Idol in Halle," or the system of indulgences revived in that city by Albert, archbishop of Mayence. The publication of the latter was withheld at the request of the elector Frederick, but Luther wrote a letter to Albert threatening the issue of this formidable treatise in case the latter did not desist within two weeks from his nefarious traffic. The archbishop was startled

by this letter from the Wittenberg friar, whom he had supposed dead. It was a voice of thunder from the cloudless sky. He deemed it best to escape the threatened storm, and terminated at once the sale of indulgences, sending also a singularly meek reply to the man whom he feared more than Leo X. or the Prince of darkness.

About this time Luther renewed his efforts to break down the system of monasticism, which endangered the consciences and souls of many. He could find no argument for it in the word of God; he could find many arguments against it. He would have the monks abandon their cells, resume their mendicancy and live more honorable lives. Marriage, he insisted, was an institution of God for the good of the race. Besides, the indolent habits of the monks were a reproach to the Church, now that God was calling men to earnest work in an age which must tell on ages to come.

Carlstadt, the impetuous Reformer, thought to put into practice the principles enunciated by the absent Luther, but his fiery zeal outran the prudence of his teacher. He turned iconoclast and inaugurated the most ruthless destruction of all that pertained to monasticism. He also overturned the altars of superstition in the churches, tore down the pictures and attempted numerous radical changes in old customs, threatening the Reformation even in its stronghold at Wittenberg.

Tidings of this were borne to the old burg of the landgraves, and Luther resolved to hasten to the distracted city. He left Wartburg, not expecting to return. Down the pathway of the woods he urges his way, turning now and then, it may be, a glance toward the castle

whose gray walls and solemn towers are soon to disappear. His Patmos is about to be exchanged for a sea of strife. But he who was prepared to fight wild beasts in the Thuringian forests and wilder men at Worms, is ready to lay down his life at Wittenberg if duty so require. With this purpose he hastens on, and Wartburg fades from sight. And now he is to appear in a new rôle. Heretofore he has been a radical Reformer. Now he is to enter the field of conservatism and contend with injudicious friends. He will abate not one jot or tittle of his devotion to the great doctrine of justification by faith. Christ and his cross shall still be his theme. But he will check, if possible, the iconoclasm that has incensed a loyal people. The pendulum has swung too far. Truth lies between extremes. We admire the spirit and purpose of Luther on his way to Wittenberg.

There occurred a scene at Jena which gives an insight into the character of Luther which is both pleasing and suggestive. The great warrior is pre-eminently human. His social magnetism is equal to his public address.

Two Swiss students enter Jena on their way to Wittenberg. They have sought in vain for lodging. It is Shrove Tuesday, and the strangers do not readily command attention. But at length they are admitted to the door of the Black Bear. Being shown into a waiting-room, their garments much travel-stained, they seek a retired corner, whence they make observations as guests come and go. At a writing-table sits a man of distinguished appearance. He wears a military dress. His right hand clasps his sword at his side; his left holds a manuscript. His head is covered with a red leather cap.

From beneath heavy brows look forth black, sparkling, penetrating eyes, from whose gaze the young men shrink as from the day of judgment. Yet he is gentle and kind, and soon wins their confidence. They enter into conversation with this man of the mountains. The latter, learning that they are going to Wittenberg, casually remarks that they, being natives of Switzerland, will there meet two eminent countrymen, Jerome Schurp and Augustine Schurp, his brother. They are surprised to hear this martial guest speak so intelligently of the retired scholars. "We have letters of introduction to these persons," says one of the students.

The stranger seems familiar with all the great scholars of the age, and is on intimate terms with many of them. Besides, he is himself learned in the ancient languages and holds in his hand a Hebrew Psalter. Presently the innkeeper enters. They ask him if he knows where Martin Luther is—at Wittenberg or elsewhere. The host replies that two days before Luther had been in that room, and had sat beside that very table where this knight is sitting. They expressed their great regret that they had not been present. What an opportunity of seeing the noted friar has been lost! But they are glad to sit in the same room in which he sat.

Presently two merchants enter. One of them holds in his hand a copy of Martin Luther's commentary on Galatians. He speaks of it with much interest, and asks the knight if he has ever seen it. The latter replies that he expects soon to secure a copy. Overhearing their conversation with the innkeeper, the knight learns that the merchants are poor, and he whispers to the host that he will gladly receive them as his guests. They

esteem the honor equal to the kindness. They resume their reflections on Luther and his work. Who in all Germany is not talking about that wonderful monk-man? One of them says, "I am a plain, unlettered man, but my judgment is that Luther is an angel out of heaven or a devil out of hell." The merchants retired, and soon after this the stranger rose, drew his doublet closely about his person, then, grasping the hands of the young students, gave them his blessing and bade them convey his greetings to Jerome Schurf. "Whose greetings?" they ask.—"Tell him only this. He that cometh sendeth his greetings." He then passed out of the room. If Charles V. or Leo X. had been present the students could not have been more impressed, for his bearing, conversation and indefinable power over them marked him one of the most remarkable men of the age. Perhaps even Martin Luther's presence would not have been a source of greater wonderment and delight. Certainly not. For that knight who had just gone to his chamber and will resume his journey with the early morning is Martin Luther himself.

Having arrived at Wittenberg, Luther set to work to undo the mischief Carlstadt had done. His efforts were successful, and soon there came to the late excited city a calm like that which rested on the Galilean lake when the winds were hushed. It is well that he came from the Wartburg to accomplish so great a result. Mighty to raise a tempest, he was also mighty to subdue the storm.

About this time Henry VIII., king of England, then thirty-one years of age, vain and ambitious, stopped in the midst of his rounds of pleasure, and, absenting him-



self from balls, banquets and tournaments, sat down and wrote a book. He said he would save the Church which silly fanatics threatened. "I will receive in my bosom the poisoned arrows of her assailants." It was not wounds he coveted, but some honorable title from the pope that would put him on a level with the more favored kings of France and Spain. The modest title of his book is, "*Defence of the Seven Sacraments against Martin Luther*, by the most invincible king of England and France, lord of Ireland, Henry the Eighth of that name." He wrote with royal contempt of Luther. The mendicant monk was crushed for ever, as Henry supposed, under the heel of his holy wrath. He accomplished his main purpose, for he received from the pope the title of "Defender of the Faith," and the same has come down the royal line until the present. The papacy was jubilant. The Tudor king was mightier than the German Reformer.

Luther's indignation was unbounded. His friends sought to quiet him, but in vain. He flung his answer in the face of the English throne. It was a fearless defence of the truth in opposition to the empty sophisms of the king. Its spirit was not wholly Christian, yet it needs less apology than many suppose. Luther insisted that he was at liberty to reply in terms of supreme contempt to the man in perishable purple who dared to blaspheme the King of kings and by impudent falsehoods profane his holy name. At the same time, his arguments were drawn from the word of God. He magnified the cross and the intercession of Jesus Christ. He bowed adoringly before the eternal throne, and gave all honor unto Him to whom all allegiance is due.



Shortly after this Luther's version of the German Testament, completed at Wartburg Castle, and revised, with Melanchthon's assistance, at Wittenberg, was issued and scattered broadcast over Germany. Soon there followed portions of the Old Testament, and ultimately the entire word of God.

Leo X. was dead and Adrian VI. occupied St. Peter's chair. The new pope, with even greater determination than his predecessor, endeavored to crush the pestilential heresy. But the truth would not down. It claimed the earth and eternity as its own. Adrian occupied the papal throne for the short space of one year, and was followed by Clement VII., a member of the Medici family, who thought to accomplish what Adrian had failed to do. The diet of Nuremberg was again convened; stormy days were coming on. Earthly kingdoms were threatened. Frederick's destruction is demanded. Charles V. swears this friend of heresy shall perish. Luther has left his stronghold in the mountains, and he who defies each papal bull shall be silenced by the sword. But God is watching over the interests of the truth. His Son shall be King in Zion; men shall know the way of life, and the gospel shall extend from the Baltic to the islands beyond the English Channel. The imperial diet disregarded the commands of Clement to crush the Reformer. The principles of the Reformation were accepted in the chief cities of Germany; Albert of Brandenburg, grand-master of the Teutonic Knights, and his bishop, George von Polenz, and Erhard von Queiss, espoused Luther's cause. But many who had been in sympathy with him grew fearful when they saw the storm was abroad. They would have peace, though

the papacy should, for the present, live on. Even John Staupitz shrunk into the shadow, and Erasmus assailed the Reformer. But Luther was not deflected from his course. He planted churches. He gathered the people to read the word of God, to sing his praise and to worship his only Son. He cared with diligence for the young. A system of education was established which has continued until now, the glory of that time and of each succeeding age. The War of the Peasants threw a dark shadow across the track of the Reformation. The sword was unsheathed, and by it a misguided people thought to put down the papacy and declare the people free. Foes in Luther's own household were more to be dreaded by him than external enemies. In Southern Germany insurrection prevailed. Cloisters and castles were burned and the waves of flames swept on.

Luther issued an address against the peasants, and called upon all who were loyal to the truth to resist their suicidal measures with the sword. The fanatical Münzer, claiming to act under divine direction, leading a force of eight thousand men, was signally defeated in the battle of Frankenhausen in Thuringia, and he himself was executed for his crimes. Thus the revolt was arrested, and soon thereafter brought to an end. Submission to civil authority was restored and the Reformation advanced by more peaceful means.

In the midst of this insurrection the elector Frederick died. He had been one of the most judicious friends of the Reformation, and was warmly attached to Luther. Under the shield of his official influence the gospel had been widely extended in Germany, and his name has been held in grateful remembrance by the Reformed

Church from that time until the present. Duke John succeeded him as the elector of Saxony, and exercised his authority with like wisdom.

Now, for the first time, Luther puts off the garb of an Augustine monk and assumes a less distinctive dress. He is in appearance and spirit a monk no longer. Many who have been associated with him in monastic life have entered into the marriage relation, deeming it right to break the vow of celibacy, for which there was no divine authority. As for himself, he anticipated the death of a heretic and preferred to live alone. But it afterward appeared to him that this course might be misinterpreted and used to the disadvantage of a divine ordinance, and he concluded to marry, that, as he expressed it, he might spite the devil. He was doubtless moved to this course by other and more tender considerations.

On a pleasant summer evening in June, 1525, a few of Luther's friends gathered at his house and witnessed his marriage to Catherine von Bora, a nun, born of a noble family, who with eight other nuns had escaped from the cloister and come to Wittenberg. This marriage was of course severely condemned by the papists, and even many of the Reformers were slow to give their approval. But it was clearly ordered of the Lord. It was blessed to Luther, mellowing his character, enlarging his usefulness and smoothing the way to his final rest. Luther and his Katie, in compliance with the instructions of John Frederick, the new elector, occupied the monastery, from which all the Augustines had departed. The old castellated building may still be seen, near by one of the city-gates. In con-

nection with this the remark of Gustav Freytag may well be quoted: "From that time the husband, the father, the citizen became likewise the reformer of the domestic life of his nation," and to-day Romanist and Protestant alike partake of inestimable benefits which proceeded from the marriage of the Wittenberg monk.

Several years of comparative quiet succeeded the War of the Peasants. Luther prosecuted his work in his study, sending forth his writings to all parts of Germany and enjoying the comforts of his Christian home. He continued at this time to promote popular education. This he considered one of the most important agents of human progress. By it he claimed the masses would be elevated, released from the shackles of superstition and from the power of Rome. "Papacy," he said, "hates popular education, and turns the key of the massive dungeon upon it. Where the liberal arts are cultivated her baneful light is quenched in a more dazzling effulgence." Previous to this time nearly all learning had been confined to the monasteries. The Reformation emancipated it, and not only the profounder pursuits of the cloister, but poetry, painting and the fine arts, have traveled abroad through a regenerated earth. Rome to this day opposes education; she denounces public schools, and holds her children under her power by retaining them in ignorance, the so-called mother of devotion.

In course of time Luther was visited with sickness which threatened his life, during which he repeatedly avowed his faith in Christ, his adherence to the principles of the Reformation and his desire to depart and be with the Lord. But He who kills and makes alive brought him back from the gates of the grave.

Then the plague visited Wittenberg, and, although the university was removed to Jena, Luther remained at home, doing what he could to alleviate suffering and to point the dying the way to God. After the plague had abated he issued his catechisms, a great aid to the acquisition of doctrinal knowledge. For although the people could repeat the creed, the Lord's Prayer and the ten commandments, they were in deplorable ignorance of the great indwelling principles of Christian faith and practice. But when the Bible and catechisms entered into the homes of Germany the people began to ascend in the scale of being, and the land of the Protestants ultimately became as the garden of the Lord.

The progress of the truth increased the hostility of Rome. An imperial diet was assembled at Spire. The object of this convention was twofold: first, to take measures by which Germany might be protected from the Turks; and secondly, for the suppression of heresy. The latter engaged the most attention. The edict of Worms was reaffirmed and a barrier thrown across the track of the Reformation. The action of a general council, it had been hoped by the Reformers, would secure greater freedom to the gospel, but the diet at Spire anticipated such a result and opposed itself to all reform, ignoring what had been done at a preceding diet favorable to Christian liberty.

There was aroused among the evangelicals a sentiment of opposition to these restrictive measures which expressed itself in a memorable protest by the princes and rulers who were friendly to the Reformation. Then the Reformers were, for the first time, called Protestants, a name which has been perpetuated to the present.

They protested against the withdrawal of the religious liberty granted by the previous diet, which was to have awaited the action of a general council. They protested against this later action as affecting not their worldly interests or loyalty to the empire, but the interests of their souls, both in this world and in that which is to come. They protested against the assumption that all power resides in the pope, and insisted that religious controversies should be settled by a general council of the Church, for which determination of vital questions no provision had been made. "Before all men and living creatures we protest," they said, "that we will not consent to the aforesaid resolution of this imperial diet." Thus the gauntlet was thrown down, and many apprehended such a strife as Germany had not before known. But Luther counseled peace. He would have the people wait in quietness and hope for the more favorable decisions of another day.

The emperor had ordered a diet to be held at Augsburg the following April. In anticipation of this convocation, and by request of the elector, Luther and a number of his friends met at Torgau and agreed upon the course to be pursued at Augsburg.

Soon after, Luther, still resting under the ecclesiastical ban, and hence not permitted to appear in the diet, went to the castle of Coburg, a four days' journey from Augsburg, from which point it would be practicable to hold communication with the elector. This is a second Wartburg. Spacious apartments were assigned him in the castle. The windows commanded a prospect of Thuringia and Franconia and the long line of hills beyond, whilst in the foreground was a little grove where, as



Luther said, "the daws and the crows held an imperial diet," their hall more beautiful than that of any royal palace, arched by the far-reaching heavens, the floor the meadows inlaid with green branches, and their walls the world's limits. In his castle he is busied with his books. He writes letters to the elector. He thinks much of home also, and sends messages to wife and children. Very beautiful and tender are the latter, revealing the depth of affection which nestles in the old warrior's heart.

Previous to the Augsburg diet, Charles V. had been crowned by the pope at Bologna. The ceremony was inspiring. The vicar of Christ was recognized as the king of nations, claiming for himself the prerogatives of God. The royal Charles, robed in the imperial mantle sparkling with diamonds and hemmed with gold, bent the knee to Clement. As the pope placed the crown on the head of Charles he said, "Charles, emperor invincible, receive this crown which we place on your head as a sign to all the earth of the authority that is upon thee." Thereupon Charles, kissing the pope's slipper, said, "I swear to be, with all my powers and resources, the perpetual defender of the pontifical dignity and of the Church of Rome." Then all the bells of the city rang. The people on the streets rent the air with shouts. The bands of music also gave voice to the common joy. The kingdom of heaven was married to the kingdom of this world in a union which Rome said must not be dissolved.

The emperor rose from his knees and left the altar of San Petroneo, carrying with him the papal benediction, prepared to do the bidding of Rome in the home of the



Germans. His march toward Augsburg was attended with great pomp. As he proceeded northward the alarm of the Protestants increased. At length they resolved to oppose his advance. "Let us collect our troops, march on the Tyrol and close the passage of the Alps against the emperor." Luther discouraged an appeal to arms. "God is faithful," he said; "he will not abandon us;" and the Coburg Castle resounded with the voice of confiding trust, its echoes extending over the German empire: "A strong tower is our God."

Charles's entrance to Augsburg was calculated to deepen the fears of the timid Protestants, for a more magnificent pageant had never been witnessed in that north-west. A company of landgraves were followed by princes, counts and counselors. Then came Bavarian horsemen, marching five abreast with flashing doublets and gleaming armor and on their heads great nodding plumes. After these rode nobles from Austria, Bohemia and Spain, all richly attired, followed by the princes with their royal retinue and the elector of Saxony carrying the imperial sword, and, last of all, the emperor himself in gorgeous robes, riding a richly-caparisoned horse, over him a canopy of brilliant colors supported by six senators of Augsburg. An inspiring greeting extended by high officials at the gates of the city was succeeded by the discharge of artillery from all the heights and the chiming of bells in all the church-towers.

At a late hour the emperor entered the great cathedral, the columns wreathed in garlands, floral arches dropping their fragrance, a flood of light making resplendent every nook and alcove of the temple, the organ throb-

bing with harmonies befitting the occasion, and a *Te Deum* following, whilst the emperor, bowing before the high altar, turned his face and lifted his hands toward an invisible throne beyond the night and far above the münster towers.

The days succeeding were filled with disputations, the waves of contention ebbing and flowing as the sea. Meanwhile, messengers are passing between Augsburg and Castle Coburg. Luther at his far remove is the presiding spirit in the imperial diet. He is continually occupied with wrestling prayer. Three morning hours of each day are spent alone with God. At times he seems to forget the presence of man, and down the long corridors of the castle rolls the voice of prayer, climbing thence the pathway of the skies. Listen! "I know thou art our Father and our God, and that thou wilt scatter the persecutors of thy children, for thou art thyself endangered with us. All this matter is true, and it is only by thy constraint that we have put our hands to it. Defend us, then, O Father." And thus he pleads as the hours go on. Prayer triumphs. God comes down to earth, and vain is the opposition of men though they wear papal tiaras and imperial crowns.

The Augsburg Confession, in substance the work of Luther, its chastened diction and tempered spirit bearing the imprint of Melancthon's hand, was read in the Palatine chapel. It set forth those great doctrines which are styled evangelical in opposition to the pagan philosophies which had dominated Rome—Christ exalted as supreme and only Head of the Church; salvation attained through his sacrifice, which the mass profanely displaces or professes to repeat; the necessity of personal

holiness, which is declared to be the will of God and a condition of final salvation ; the word of God the only rule of faith and life ; and the separation of Church and State, the union of which, a fundamental principle of the papacy, had brought only evil along all the years—a principle opposed by the spirit of the gospel and by the express declaration of the Son of God, whose kingdom is not of this world.

Here the Protestants plant themselves ; not only the representatives of old monasteries and theological schools, but the elector of Saxony, Philip, landgrave of Hesse, margraves, princes, dukes and royal deputies, declare themselves in sympathy with the Confession and pledge eternal fealty to Him who died that the dead might live and the homeless go home to God. Then Coburg Castle reflects the joy, and Luther, with beaming face turned heavenward, exclaims, “ Christ is in the diet and he does not keep silence ; the word of God cannot be bound.”

The Reformation has reached the table-lands. The gospel is shining over Europe. The long-expected day is come, and generations following shall share the fruits of this great reform, the greatest work accomplished since Paul planted the cross in the city of the Cæsars and the New Jerusalem opened its gates above the Ægean isle. From this time Luther pursues his studies and sends forth his books without molestation or fear. He lives happily with his beloved Catherine, and together they anticipate the fellowship of the world beyond. Afflictions come to them : children that had nestled in their bosoms and cheered them with their innocent prattle, and made the old arches resound with their laughter, sicken and die. Luther is mellowed by sorrow, and,

like the royal mourner, sends his fondest thoughts on to the home-coming and the reunions of the skies.

Luther is approaching the goal of life. "I am old, weary and useless," he writes to a friend. "I have finished my journey, and naught remains but for the Lord to gather me to my fathers. Pray for me. I think no more, dear Spalatin, about the emperor and the empire, except to refer one and the other to God in my prayers. Grown old and worn like a garment, I long to be folded and laid aside."

In the **mid**winter he left Wittenberg that he might revisit his early home and do some work for Christ along the way. Passing safely through the perils of a flood at Halle, he came to Eisleben. Thence he sent affectionate messages to his dear Catherine, on whose face he was never to look again, commending her to God's most loving care. He spoke of his approaching death, of the recognition of friends in heaven and of the joy of being with Christ. At the close of a day spent in exhausting labors he retired to his chamber; at the window which looked toward Jerusalem he prayed. The shadow of death was on his face. His two sons and friends dearly beloved watched tenderly beside his bed. For a little he slept peacefully as a child, his weary head on the bosom of Him who long had been his refuge in trouble. Near midnight he awoke and looked affectionately into the faces of his anxious friends, bidding them cease their vigils and seek needful rest. Then turning his eyes toward heaven, he said, "Into thy hands I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, Lord God of truth." Again he said, "I commend my soul to thee, my Jesus. I am about to quit this terrestrial body, but I know that

"I shall abide eternally with thee." Then he slept for a little and awoke in heaven. The morning had not yet come to the dear old town, but he was looking upon the face of his Beloved, to whose cross he had clung, for whose cause he had suffered, in devotion to whom he would gladly have endured a martyr's death.

Luther died on the 18th of February, 1546, in his sixty-fourth year, in the Mansfeld Castle at Eisleben. His life ended where it began. On the 20th the funeral procession left Eisleben, and reached Wittenberg on the third day following, being met by a sorrowing multitude at the Elster Gate. At the castle-church Bugenhagen preached the solemn sermon from the words of St. Paul: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him." Melanchthon, who had been Luther's most intimate, unwavering friend, then pronounced an affectionate eulogy upon the departed man, the greatest since apostolic days. Once he had said concerning him "Luther is too great, too wonderful, for me to depict in words. If there be a man on earth I love with my whole heart, that man is Luther. One is an interpreter, another an orator, affluent and beautiful in speech, but Luther is all in all; whatever he writes, whatever he utters, pierces to the soul, fixes itself like arrows in the heart; he is a miracle among men." Now that he is gone, Melanchthon mourns, and Germany with him.

Loving hands laid the mortal part of Luther in the

earth in front of the pulpit in the castle-church from which he had often spoken, with a holy boldness and unction unsurpassed, the wonderful words of life.

Nay, that Wittenberg church is not his tomb, but what Pericles said of another may be more truthfully said of Luther: "The whole earth is the sepulchre of the illustrious man."

We attempt now no analysis of his character. Our story of him, as it has run on, has suggested the elements of his greatness. He had faults. He was not always wise. To err is human. He lived in an age of the world which encouraged roughness of speech, and he must not be judged by the standard of that better day which he inaugurated. But, take him all in all, he stands supreme among the magnates of eighteen centuries, a Mont Blanc among Alpine men, at whom dwellers on the plains and in the valleys gaze with an admiration which increases with advancing time. We think of him as did Thomas Carlyle, as "unsubduable granite, piercing far and wide into the heavens, yet in the clefts of it fountains green, beautiful valleys with flowers."

Truly, God exalted the miner's son to the summit of moral power. And although Frederick was good, Erasmus learned and Melanchthon gentle as the beloved John, yet the Augustinian monk in moral grandeur and potential deeds outstripped them all, and no man since Paul and the apostles lived has reached such a stature and cast so long a shadow, in which earth's scorched and weary ones hide, as Martin Luther, born at Eisleben, born again at Erfurt, baptized afresh on Pilate's Staircase, separated from Rome in the con-



test at Leipsic and crowned one of world's mightiest at the diet of Worms.

We bless God for this extraordinary man, for it was God who gave him to the world and by him divided the clouds which hung over Europe and darkened it, that the glorious Sun of righteousness might shine through, and men, ignorant, enslaved and lost, might find the way to Christ and heaven.





ZWINGLE: THE MOUNTAIN-SHEPHERD.

16

*"I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."*

2 COR. 2 : 2.

*"Christ by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf."*

CON. FAITH, CHAP. xi. SEC. iii.

## ZWINGLE: THE MOUNTAIN-SHEPHERD.

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IN the great Reformation, Martin Luther occupies the first position. A galaxy of stars shone in the night-time of papal supremacy. There was only one polar star. Around it gathered the lesser lights, each bearing its part in the illumination of the long-darkened world. Erasmus was timid and fickle; Melanchthon was cautious and moved slowly; Frederick was reluctant to break with Rome; Carlstadt was aflame with zeal, but often imprudent. And yet all these rendered valuable service, and the absence of any one of them would have delayed the needful reform. With them were associated many of like spirit, of whom history makes honorable mention.

Whilst Martin Luther was stirring all Germany with his theses, his vigorous writings and his public addresses, and Rome feared his power, God was raising up other men in the contiguous kingdoms to battle for the truth. And it is a fact worthy of special mention, indicating the superintending providence of God, that there was no collusion among these national Reformers. They acted independently and yet simultaneously. Thus history repeated itself. As devout men in Israel, Magi in the East and sincere inquirers in the land of Confucius, without interchange of thought, separated by broad, uninhabited spaces, were looking for the Messiah's

advent, so Saxony, Switzerland and France, divided by great mountains, across which travelers seldom went, were watching for the return of the glorious gospel day, and making ready for it. God's thought preceded man's. His action antedated human effort.

Let us now leave the land of Luther and see what is transpiring in regions lying toward the west. We will pause in our advance among the valleys of Switzerland, beside its beautiful lakes and on its mountain-slopes. Here we shall find the kindlings of light which betoken a better day. God is working silently and unobserved. He is seeking his apostles among the humble, and is about to inaugurate a work which shall bring new beauty to the valleys and new grandeur to the mountains—not material, but spiritual, born of a heavenly day.

Ascending by a steep path which winds upward through deep forests and across barren slopes, we reach a rustic village called the Wildhaus, two thousand feet above the sheltered waters of the Zurich lake. The river Thun runs near by. The cultivated fields yield a scanty fruitage as a reward of patient toil. The higher mountain-peaks, clad in perpetual snows, silent and solemn sentinels, keep watch over the simple hamlets which sit at their feet. A few minutes' walk from Wildhaus brings us to a cottage built of logs. Seeming to apologize for its presence, it hugs the ground and hides among the trees. Yet there are few spots in Central Europe that have been so honored as that rude cottage on this Alpine height, for here was born Ulrich Zwingli, the Swiss Reformer, a man but little inferior in the attributes of human greatness and in potential deeds to his contemporary, the son of the Eisleben miner.

His birth occurred Jan. 1, 1484, less than two months after Luther's, and God designed a simultaneous movement in the interests of the truth on both sides of the Alps. Ulrich's father was the bailiff of the village parish, and much respected by his fellow-mountaineers. He was alike devoted to the Swiss Confederation and the Romish Church. At the fireside he talked much with his children of the struggles by which the Zoggenburg had secured its independence, and descanted in glowing terms on the natural grandeur and civil advantages of the Swiss cantons, the Hebrew confederation of Central Europe. His conversation also, though less frequently than that of the mother, embraced higher themes, and the thoughts of young Ulrich dwelt on the stories of Bethlehem and Calvary, and ascended thence to the heaven which received the departed Lord. When yet a mere child he was placed in a school at Wesen, for his father believed he was designed for some more important service than that of a mountain-shepherd. The boy was fond of books and made rapid progress in his studies. When ten years of age he was transferred to Basle, a famous city, where there was much to impress and stimulate the mind of the precocious Ulrich. It was a seat of learning. Here the great scholars congregated. The sage of Rotterdam shed an intellectual halo over the university town, for, with all his frailties, Erasmus was one of the greatest men of his age. George Binzli presided over St. Theodore's School, and there was none better fitted, at this stage in his education, to have the care of Ulrich. Put the boy soon completed the course of studies prescribed in his primary school, and it was deemed best to remove him to Berne, where

he was placed under the instruction of Lupulus, one of the eminent scholars of that day, who left the impress of his own unique character upon the ardent pupil. But unexpected perils surrounded the latter. He was urged to enter the Dominican convent and devote himself to a monastic life. Then came a peremptory message from Wildhaus to flee from the wiles which endangered his future. It was a trial to leave Lupulus and depart from Berne—beautiful Berne, skirted by the Aar and overshadowed by the Alps. But his father's authority was regarded, and Ulrich became a student of philosophy in Vienna; and then, after a brief period, during which he made great advancement in his studies, he again returned to Basle, where he was occupied at first with literary pursuits, and subsequently with scholastic theology. Thus he came in contact, by these seemingly adverse changes, with the great minds of his age and with the different phases of religious thought. God was leading him on, step by step, to that eminence in knowledge and influence which has linked his name with those of Luther, Calvin and Beza, all of whom shall live in history until the world shall end.

In the vicinity of Wildhaus, the mountain-village of Zwingle's birth, was the hamlet of Glaris. The little flock on that far height was shepherdless. The people expressed a wish that Zwingle might be their priest. He was accordingly received to holy orders. The ceremony of induction occurred in the old münster at Constance, the same in which John Huss was condemned to the stake. He spent a brief season in his native village, performing certain duties of his office, and then, although he had just passed his majority, he went thoughtfully



on to Glaris, leaving his simple home and the village church with a presentiment that he might never return to them. He was stepping out on a broad arena and about to enter upon a work that was destined to mould the ages following. In his first parish he labored with commendable zeal. He was a devout papist. As yet he did not question the authority of the pope or the Christless philosophies of the times.

His ministrations were soon interrupted. He was living in a martial age and caught its spirit. He joined his countrymen in a war with France, in which a humiliating repulse was succeeded by signal victory. Julius II., the reigning pope, gave the conquering Swiss his benediction and styled them "defenders of the liberty of the Church." The Alps re-echoed with the shouts of the conquerors, and Rome was confident of continued supremacy in the mountain-girded cantons.

But already young Zwingle, devoting himself with characteristic zeal to the study of the Scriptures, and communing through their writings with the early Fathers, began to exalt the word of God above the traditions of the Church and to discover some fragments of evangelical truth, long buried by papal decretals and sensuous rites. The corruption of monastic orders, the general dissoluteness of the people, the prevailing ignorance of nominal Christians and the almost utter want of reverence for God and sacred things startled the thoughtful priest. "Surely," he thought, "the Church is on the verge of great disaster." He was perplexed. He studied more profoundly—now the old philosophies which dominated Rome, now the words of God which evidently opposed them. It was simply a question

whether Aristotle or Christ should have the supremacy. His classic tastes checked his search for the truth. He read Homer and Pindar with great delight. He often went, in admiring thought, to the Bema and Pnyx, and listened to the unexampled oratory which stirred Athens and all Attica, or lingered long on the wooded banks of Cephissus where Plato taught, and then, passing westward, yielded his soul to the classic eloquence of Rome in the ages of the Cæsars.

But soon a reaction came. God is infinitely greater than all the sages of Greece and Rome. There is a diviner poetry in the Psalms of David than is to be found in the *Odyssey* or *Iliad*. The preacher of Mars' Hill is incomparably more eloquent than Pericles, and is a profounder philosopher than Plato or Aristotle. Zwingle's mind is settled. The word of God must be his rule of faith. If Rome will be pagan, then Rome and he must part company. "Supreme vanity!" some were ready to say, "this priest of mountain-rustics setting himself against popes and cardinals at whose feet emperors have bowed!"

Zwingle thirsts for companionship with the great thinkers of his age. The fame of some of them, growing with the years, has reached his mountain-home. He resolves to visit Basle, and sets out alone. Deep thoughts stir his soul, and high resolves are being formulated as he descends the mountain-paths and threads the valleys. The great Erasmus welcomes the priest of Glaris, pronounces him an exceptional genius and predicts for him a wide renown. Very memorable was that visit to Basle. Zwingle had seen Erasmus and talked with him. The scholarship of the sage of Rotterdam was a marvel

to the scholastic priest. His reverence for the word of God confirmed Zwingle's faith. The latter had received an impulse along the line of scriptural truth which was destined to carry him on to more fruitful fields and to grander results than the faint-hearted and temporizing Erasmus ever reached.

Again he left Glaris. The red banners of Rome were moving northward, and the Swiss, loyal to the Church, went to the aid of Italy against the seditious armies of France. Zwingle remonstrated in vain, then girded on his sword. On the gory field of Marignan brave battalions of his countrymen perished, and Zwingle's soul was wrung with anguish. A great wrong had been committed by Rome, and Rome suffered for it. But out of all this a great good was to come. Although Zwingle did not question the righteousness of an appeal to arms when the Church was threatened, yet he was losing his faith in the Church. The pope is corrupt and his influence is corrupting. Cardinals reflect his image. The priesthood is ignorant and sensual. The monasteries are the sinks of sin. The word of God is bound. The hierarchy holds the public conscience and debases the people. Great is the moral darkness, and beyond it, unless God interpose, a starless, endless night.

Zwingle returned to his secluded parish. The people knew a great change had come over him. He preached with an increase of power. He knew nothing but the word of God. The Gospels and Epistles kindled a strange, glad light amid the mountain-solitudes—a light which was destined to shine to the utmost limits of the Switzers' land.

The preacher is not so much occupied with error as

with truth. He combats darkness with light. He does not denounce Rome, but he exalts the doctrines of the apostolic Church, and points to the heights of purity which are attainable and should be sought by all. His work at Glaris is at an end.

On the high table-land which overlooks the lake at Zurich, three thousand feet above the sea-level, is Einsidlen, a simple village which clusters its homes around a venerable abbey. If you will credit the superstitious monks, this abbey has a history which is second in interest only to that of the Bethlehem manger. On the spot where it stands, in the days of Charlemagne, a holy anchorite, bowing before an image of the Virgin Mary, was murdered by two marauders, whose crime was miraculously revealed and punished. Here the Benedictine hermits built a church, and to them was given the sanctity which distinguished the martyred representative of the house of Hohenzollern. Here the abbot Eberard ministered, and the place was consecrated by the presence of Christ and angels ere the bishop of Constance, intending to dedicate the church in accordance with sacred usage, had come. His offices were unneeded. The pope declared the consecration a miracle. On one of the stones Christ had left the impression of his right hand. Plenary indulgence was granted to all pilgrims who worshiped at the shrine of Our Lady of the Hermits. Each year thereafter a holy festival was kept in the Benedictine abbey, and in anticipation of it devout pilgrims thronged the mountain-paths which led thither. To this shrine Ulrich Zwingli was summoned, and he became the priest of Einsidlen. Glaris was bereft, but God so

appointed. In this secluded spot Zwingle was to complete his preparation for his great work. Here he grew in knowledge of the Scriptures, and by the truth was lifted to a higher spiritual life. His ready and retentive memory was stored with whole books of the sacred word, and his soul was enlarged. Soon he abated his regard for the shrine which attracted pilgrims from afar. God was not confined to Einsidlen. His altar stands not alone on this mountain at Gerizim or at Jerusalem. Nor is he pleased with the austerities of an ascetic life, with garments of rough serge girt round with ropes, and wooden sandals that torture the feet, and Pater Nosters and Ave Marias repeated in old abbeys removed from the noise and turmoil of the busy world. God fills all space. He is accessible on the plains, in the city and out on the broad fields of toil as well as in monasteries and cells, and what he claims is the heart's devotion, caring little whether it be clothed in monkish garb or an unconventional dress. Moreover, said Zwingle, "Christ is our sacrifice; we need no other." "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Learned men sat at the feet of the evangelical preacher. The expression of a familiar creed, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins," the same which carried a heavenly light into the cell of the Erfurt monk, was invested with a new and strange interest as Zwingle repeated it beside a vacant cross, gazing into heaven. The Sun of righteousness is in the ascendant. The light of a better day is shining over the Switzers' land.

But error contends with the truth. Rome resists the gospel. Another Tetzels appears, and the traffic in indul-

gences is repeated. Along the mountain-roads, when the summer of 1518 was well advanced, a Franciscan monk was seen approaching Uri, and as his attendants announced that the pardon of sins past and prospective might be purchased with money, the amount so graduated as to meet their ability, there was at once inaugurated a successful trade, and the mercenary monk departed laden with his ill-gotten gains. But passing into the contiguous canton, he encountered Zwingle, and a conflict ensued. "Heaven and hell are subject to my power," said Samson, the blaspheming Franciscan. Was he not the representative of Rome, and had not the pope delegated to him the power which releases from purgatorial fires and opens the gates of Paradise? "Impossible," said Zwingle. "Only Christ forgives. He invites the sin-burdened to himself. He is the only Oblation, the only Sacrifice, the only Way." Public sentiment was divided. Some believed a lie, and starved their souls whilst they enriched the papal treasury. Some carried their burdens to Jesus the Christ and found peace. Zwingle is gaining the confidence of a long-enslaved people. The power of Rome is waning. The presumptuous monk seeks other fields and repeats his plunders where there is none to oppose.

About this time the canons of the cathedral at Zurich were seeking for a priest to supply a vacancy caused by the departure of a former incumbent. At once some influential friends determined to secure this position for Zwingle, deeming him eminently fitted for so responsible a trust. But they encountered a most intense and unscrupulous opposition. Zwingle's character was defamed. His enemies produced witnesses who were ready to sub-



stantiate the most groundless charges, puerile or grave, as might best subserve their end. They secured a large following, but the more intelligent paid little attention to the falsehoods of these extreme papists. The college of canons met, and Zwingle was chosen by an almost unanimous vote. The news carried consternation to Einsidlen. The people loved their priest. All Switzerland could not furnish his equal. Many resisted his transfer to Zurich; some favored it for the truth's sake. What might not this bold and gifted man accomplish as the cathedral preacher in one of the chief cities of their Fatherland? Zwingle believed it was a call from God. There was much to attract him to Zurich. It was a centre of population, learning and influence, from which the truth might pass along many radiating lines to the utmost limits of Switzerland and cross mountain-ranges into the great empires beyond. Thither he went.

Zurich is a beautiful city. It was beautiful in Zwingle's day: before it and stretching southward the lake which bears the same name, around it the great hills covered with vineyards and orchards, whilst snow-capped mountains cast grateful shadows over it on the summer days and sheltered it from wintry blasts. The cathedral still remains, though built eight centuries ago. Its circular portals, with quaint cloisters, and long nave supported by pillars and solemn arches, the high walls overlooking the chimney-steeple of the busy town, its double towers catching the first beams of the morning and retaining the crimson sunset when the lake is dark with shadows,—render the cathedral in which the Helvetian Reformer preached the glorious gospel of a once-crucified but now risen and exalted Lord one of the most interest-



ing temples of the Old World. Its architectural attractions are few, and, although an imposing edifice in Zurich, it might be hidden in some unnoticed recess of St. Peter's church at Rome, yet there is a glory crowning it such as the great basilica by the Tiber never knew—a glory born in heaven and luring multitudes to its native skies.

Having entered upon his duties as cathedral preacher, Zwingli introduced certain changes which were distasteful to some of the canons. From the days of Charlemagne only fragmentary portions of the Scriptures were used in connection with the public service, and the comments of the priests upon these were greatly lacking in fullness, spirituality and force. Zwingli could not be superficial. His soul craved the roots of things, and to these he sought to lead his hearers. He had distinctly outlined in the hearing of the college canons his purpose in this respect: "The life of Christ has too long been hidden from the people; I shall preach upon the whole of St. Matthew's Gospel, chapter by chapter, according to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, without human commentaries, drawing solely from the fountain of Scripture, sounding its depths, comparing one passage with another and seeking for understanding by constant and earnest prayer. It is to God's glory, to the praise of his only Son, to the real salvation of souls and to their edification in the true faith, that I shall consecrate my ministry." Then there followed an ominous silence. The new priest seemed to stand alone. Presently strong expressions of disapproval, in which nearly all the canons sympathized, made it apparent that Zwingli must encounter much opposition on the very threshold of his work. But God inspired him with a holy boldness and

an unwavering trust. He must preach Christ in Zurich as he had preached him at Glaris and Einsidlen, or the lights kindled on the mountain-slopes will disappear and a profounder night come on. God is in Switzerland as he is in Germany, and when the time to work has arrived, who can hinder?

Now let us enter the old cathedral. It is the first day of January, 1519, the birthday of the newly-arrived priest. The cathedral is crowded from the high altar to the outer doors. The people are curious to see the new preacher and hear him. They have learned something of the splendor of his gifts and the eloquence of his address. They wait in breathless suspense for his appearance. The hour for worship arrives, and Zwingle is in his place. His personal appearance is prepossessing. There is not so handsome a man in all the canton of Zurich. He is only thirty-five years of age—too young, think some, to preside over this great church and represent the venerable chapter which has called him from his mountain-parish. But soon their fears are dissipated. His strength has outrun his years. His clear, sympathetic voice reaches all ears and moves every heart. Some approve his words, some disapprove them; but all recognize his power. He repeated, substantially, in the pulpit what he had said to the cathedral canons. Like Paul at Corinth and Luther at Wittenberg, he determined to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. He had been at the cross; he had also visited the sepulchre and found it vacant. He had gazed into heaven as did the disciples on Olivet, and had seen something of Christ's glory. Now he goes forth in the strength of recovered truth to preach Jesus only.

The next day is the Sabbath. The Annunciation is his theme. He carries his hearers to Nazareth. They hear an angelic voice, look on a humble virgin, behold the dawning of a glorious day. The service is full of Jesus, who saves his people from their sins.

Beyond the mighty priesthood, beyond the solemn mass, beyond the confessional and its professed absolution, is the Son of Mary, the only Saviour, mighty to redeem. Many of the people behold that great sight for the first time. They see but dimly, yet joyfully, through their tears. Zurich never saw a day like this. The great cathedral pile never re-echoed with so glad a sound. Is it real or only a dream? The popular heart is with the preacher. But the college of priests shake their heads, mutter something and go sullenly out. Had you walked down the streets of Zurich that day as the people returned to their homes, you might have heard such exclamations as these: "Never has priest preached like that priest;" "The night is past;" "We have seen a glorious light to-day;" "Thank God for Ulrich Zwingli!" And nature is in harmony with the common joy. The meridian sun bathes the hills and waters in a soft, sweet radiance. The tops of the Albis Mountains seem to point the Zurichers to heaven, and even to speak of its glorious King.

Another and a glad surprise awaited the people. The eloquent preacher was also a sympathetic pastor. He had his hours of study, and guarded them from all unnecessary intrusion. Even he could not teach unless he was much alone with God and his word. But he devoted other hours just as assiduously to pastoral duties. He mingled much with the people. In the marts of

trade he reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, and, like Paul in Ephesus, he preached from house to house. The humble recognized in him their friend; the noble esteemed him their sympathetic peer. Truly, Zurich was glad because of him, and the moral desert blossomed as the rose.

The influence of Zwingle was not confined by the walls nor by the boundary-lines of the Zurich canton. Though very unlike Luther, his contemporary beyond the Alps, and not so mighty a factor in the Reformation, yet he was to Helvetia what Martin Luther was to Saxony, and quite as well adapted to the sphere God had assigned him. He was not an Elijah in rough mantle thundering his messages at city-gates and in the palaces of kings. He was a loving John rather, walking softly; resolute, yet gentle, seeking to lead men to Christ by a sweet persuasion rather than to bear them thither in a hurricane of vehemence or on the bosom of a polemic storm. And yet when occasion demanded it he had the mien and the voice of a lion, and, misguided by his age, he even unwisely resorted to carnal weapons in the support of a spiritual kingdom. But his mistakes were few. When opposed in Zurich he acted wisely, and waited patiently for a good which could not be attained at once. There were things about him which he appeared not to see and words of fierce denunciation which he seemed not to hear. Some radical Reformers in Helvetia, like the impetuous Carlstadt in Saxony, had made him the butt of their sarcasm, and claimed that so feeble was he that his voice had never reached beyond his own cathedral walls. But even then, though only a mere youth, all Switzerland heard him, and the jealousy, hatred,

defamation and organized opposition of enemies only proved his influence and power.

God is in Switzerland. His hand is marking out the pathways of his truth. The cloud which error has hung over cantons and kingdoms is yielding before the rising sun. The Church shall go forth under the gleam of a rediscovered heaven, fair as the moon, clear as the sun and terrible as an army with banners. Lands yet unknown shall receive the truth ; generations yet unknown shall rejoice in it, and down all the ages the glorious gospel shall press its way until the Lord shall come again.

ULRICH ZWINGLE: LATER MINISTRY.

*“As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.”*

I COR. II : 26.

*“In this sacrament Christ is not offered up to his Father, nor any real sacrifice made at all for remission of sins of the quick or dead, but only a commemoration of that once offering up of himself, by himself, upon the cross, once for all, and a spiritual oblation of all possible praise unto God for the same ; so that the popish sacrifice of the mass, as they call it, is most abominably injurious to Christ's one only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of the elect.”*

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXIX. SEC. ii.



## ULRICH ZWINGLE: LATER MINISTRY.

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WE resume our narrative of the Reformation in Northern Switzerland. Zwingle did for this land of mountain and plain what Luther did for Saxony beyond the Rhine. As the months advanced lines were more clearly drawn; resistance to the truth became more determined on the one side, and devotion to it more ardent on the other. The Reformer's life was threatened, but he went calmly on in his work. Jesus came not to send peace on the earth, but a sword. His servant was prepared to suffer and, if necessary, to die. He slept peacefully whilst armed men guarded his home by night, and wrought courageously when foes thirsting for his blood scowled on him by day. When the forests were searched for fugitive friends, torches blazing amid the darkness and the minions of Rome shouting their war-cry on the mountain-heights, he abode in Zurich, believing himself immortal until his work was done.

Again the infamous traffic in indulgences projects its shadow across his path. He resisted falsehood with the truth. He preached Christ as the Sin-bearer, the great Forgiver, through whom alone souls are accepted with God and eternally saved. Then the council of Zurich was convened, and Samson the monk was forbidden to enter the city. By a cunning falsehood the latter secured admittance, but was quickly ejected. This result declared

Zwingle's strength and the already declining power of Rome. Samson departed in a rage, pronouncing anathemas on the town. Soon after he was seen climbing the steep mountain-road on the south, his face toward Italy, three horses drawing after them the gold and silver ducats which Rome loved more than it loved the souls of its superstitious subjects.

Still other trials and triumphs awaited the Reformer. Physical sufferings brought him down, and his work seemed about to end. This was a darker period in his life than he had known before. But it was appointed for his good. There are lessons that can be learned only in such a school. There are a mellowness of character, a depth of sympathy and a holy unction which are born only in sick chambers and on the confines of death. The Zurich pastor must go into the wilderness. Many hearts ache and many eyes are wet with tears as the loving shepherd leaves his flock. Away in a darkened valley, where lamps were burned at noonday and the roar of mountain-torrents was never hushed, at the baths of Pfeffers, he waited patiently for the troubling of the waters and a healing power that comes from heaven. The interpretation of this providence came sooner than he expected. When strength was returning and hope began to brighten his gloomy dwelling, there came tidings of evil from his dear Zurich. The plague had made its appearance in the city, and the people were going in battalions to their graves. He hastened thither. He ministered to the dying and buried the dead. His voice was like a strain of music in darkened homes. But the plague smote the pastor also. Again Zurich was overwhelmed with fear. Zwingle alone was calm. A poet,

he expressed in simple flowing numbers his trust in Jesus. Listening to death's knock at his unguarded door, he hid himself in the cleft of the Rock, and waited for the appearing of One who is mightier than death. He thinks of those to whom he had ministered in the mountain-valleys, many of whom have fallen, whilst others are about to perish, for Tockenbergl is wrestling with the plague and the old home at Wildhaus is darkened by sorrow. The rumor spreads throughout Switzerland that Zwingle at last is dead. Basle is filled with mourning, as was Wittenberg when the funeral cortège came from Eisleben and Luther was laid in the cathedral vault. But *this* sickness was not unto death. Zwingle came back from that border-land where lights mingle with shadows and sobbings with angelic songs. He gathered the fruits of righteousness from the furrows of affliction. "The gospel, which had hitherto been too much regarded by him as a doctrine, now became a great reality. He arose from the darkness of the sepulchre with a new heart. His zeal became more active, his life more holy, his preaching more free, more Christian, more powerful. This was the epoch of Zwingle's complete emancipation; henceforward he consecrated himself entirely to God."

It was probably two years after the plague, in 1522, that Zwingle was married to Anna Reinhardt, a widow; but the fact of his marriage was unwisely concealed until two years later. Zwingle feared that the violation of his vow of celibacy, although the breaking of it was more meritorious than the keeping of it would have been, might militate against his usefulness by wounding the weak consciences of some and increasing the hostility on

the part of others. Something may be said in palliation of his mistake, since he lived in a peculiar age and in the midst of peculiar trials; but secret marriages are wrong and always to be condemned. His wife was a woman of great excellence of character, of whom Gla-rean said, "she was to be preferred to a king's daughter." She was to Zwingli a faithful and helpful companion, and his care of her was as honorable as his love was profound. He also enjoyed the fellowship of a few kindred spirits, chief among whom was Oswald Myconius, who had been rector of St. Theodore's School at Berne, later of St. Peter's School at Basle, and afterward a resident of Zurich. Ulrich and Oswald were almost inseparable. Their love was strong as death. Together they talked and toiled and prayed. Their mutual relations were such as those of Luther and Melancthon or, at a later day, of Calvin and Farel. The friends parted in great sorrow, each commending the other to the care of God and breathing that significant and historic word which had come down the ages—Mizpah.

Occasionally some friend of earlier days visited the Lake City, and letters came more frequently from Oswald, Hedio, Capito and others encouraging him in his difficult work. John Glother of Basle expressed his strong affection for the Reformer, and indicated in part the ground of it when he wrote, "Oh, my dear Zwingli, never can I forget you. You have won my affections by that gracefulness of manner, that inexpressible suavity, with which you subdue all hearts." His fame had now crossed the Alps, and messages of commendation and love came to him from those who fought like battles on other fields. Meanwhile enemies sought his life. Poison

and poignard were summoned to put an end to the Reformation which papal authority could not check. Zwingle was unmoved. He planted his feet on the everlasting Rock, within the roar but above the violence of the waves. Standing on that serene height, he predicted the downfall of Rome, on his face the gleam of a peaceful day; for possessing a soul of more than common stature, he saw the peaks of coming events hidden from other eyes.

Then was assembled the Helvetic diet at Zurich, Zwingle's own city. An effort was made to suppress all preaching which contravened the teachings of Rome or impaired the influence of the old monasteries, the centres of papal power. But Zwingle, firm as Luther at the Diet of Worms, declared his purpose to preach the gospel, cost what it might. If his teachings could be shown to be in conflict with the word of God, he would submit to any censure or punishment the council might inflict. His spirit was temperate and his speech mild. But there he stood, immovable as the mountain which looked down on the distracted city. The moral heroism triumphed. God was in it and wrought by it. Zwingle continued to exalt Christ, and new fields opened to the intrepid preacher. Like Paul at Appii Forum, he thanked God and took courage.

But there were wars and rumors of wars. The sons of Helvetia, noble and humble, had gone down in the shock of battle, and the voice of weeping swept over the land. The enemies of Switzerland had gained a signal victory. French hostility joined hands with Rome, and the Reformation trembled on the verge of extinction. But God was the refuge of his people, and

they grew calm, even though the seas roared and the mountains shook with the swelling thereof.

Then light arose in the darkness. One and another, counting the cost, even courting the martyr's crown, stood forth on the field of truth and pledged undying fealty to the Church. Preachers of the word multiplied. The belt of life widened. Friends of the Reformation assembled at Einsidlen, and from its commanding summits surveyed the better future. The conflict, which was to end in a far-reaching peace, was severe. The storm lowered over Lucerne and Zurich, then smote them with its hail. Like Luther at Wartburg, Zwingle betook himself to God in prayer. His tearful cry joined the wail of the tempest, pierced the clouds, reached the ear of the Lord of Sabaoth, and the Reformer felt the support of an almighty arm, an assuring voice saying, "Lo I am with you alway."

Zwingle rested his faith on the word of God. His system of doctrine, drawn from this divine source, was substantially that of Augustine, for he was taught by the same Spirit. Being an Augustinian, he was in accord, so far as concerned essential truth, with Martin Luther. These two men, the most remarkable of that age, did not meet until after the work of each was far advanced. Zwingle often said substantially, "If Luther preaches in Wittenberg the same gospel I preach in Zurich, then I am a Lutheran; if otherwise, I am not." Every man who believes anything has a creed, for a creed is his *credo*, or that which he believes. Zwingle had his. Its leading features he had stated. He held that man was created holy, but had fallen. Recovery was not his work, but God's. "Christ, very



man and very God," he said, "has purchased for us a never-ending redemption. His suffering satisfies the divine justice for ever in behalf of those who by an unshaken faith rely upon it. If we could have been saved by our works, it would not have been necessary for Christ to die. All who have ever come to God have come to him through the death of Jesus Christ. Christ lives and acts in him. Christ alone is his leader, and he needs no other guide. Wherever there is faith in God, there God is; and wherever God abideth, there a zeal exists urging and impelling men to do good works. The life of a Christian is one of perpetual good works, which God begins, continues and completes."

Here you observe the essentials of Christianity. The word of God our rule of life; Jesus Christ divine and yet human, two natures united in one person, and this Immanuel the representative of sinners; atonement effected by Christ's obedience unto death, availing for all who believe; the necessity of a holy life and its consummation through grace, succeeded by an eternal residence with Christ in glory. All perish who refuse or neglect this great salvation, God's only remedy for sin.

He also held the doctrine of personal election, yet not as conflicting with man's free agency and accountability to God. He preached the same evangelical system which has distinguished the Calvinistic churches of these latter days from the Arminian.

The influence of Zwingle is further seen in the response the council of Zurich made to the cantons which supported the papacy and complained of the revolutionary sentiments which were gaining ground in the canton



of Zurich. The council declared its confidence in Zwingle and his associates. "At first, indeed, their doctrine had appeared novel, because they had heard nothing of the kind before ; but when they came to understand that the scope of it was simply this—to exhibit Christ as the Author and Finisher of our salvation, who had shed his precious blood for the sins of the world, and alone delivered wretched mortals from eternal death, and who is the only Mediator between God and man—they could not but embrace such glad tidings with ardent zeal. . . . That, as to what the bishops said, of its not being lawful for them to make the Scriptures so common, it was supported by no sufficient reason : they were referred only to Fathers and councils, but their wish was to hear not what men had decreed, but what Christ willed and commanded. . . . That it seemed to them just that the goods of convents and colleges of regulars should be applied to the use of the poor, which was their original design, and not to be employed in pampering persons who did not need them ; yet, in order that no one might have just cause of complaint, they had allowed their present possessors to enjoy them for their lives. . . . That the costly ornamenting of churches was no part of the worship of God, but that the relief of the poor and miserable was highly acceptable to him ; and Christ's command to the rich young man was, not to hang up his wealth in churches for a show, but to sell all that he had and give to the poor. . . . That what was the worth of auricular confession or the recounting of sins to a priest they would not take upon them to determine ; but the confession with which true penitents betook themselves to Christ must be esteemed not

only useful, but indispensable." This is a remarkable document to proceed from a state council. It would be a novelty in our times. It shows that the Reformation was taking long steps among the mountains of Switzerland, and that Zwingli, who worked quietly, but with a will that amounted to genius, was bringing long-buried truth to light and laying the foundations for a scriptural and spiritual Church which shall stand until the Lord shall come.

At the public disputation in Zurich in 1523, Zwingli presented sixty-five theses, in which "both the formal and the material principles of the Reformation are set forth with great completeness and applied with merciless logic. But the most characteristic and original feature in them is the new principle which is added—the principle of ecclesiastical polity which has exercised so decisive an influence on the whole development and organization of the Reformed Church. The congregation, and not the hierarchy, say the theses, is the representative of the Church, and to the congregation, consequently, and not to the hierarchy, belongs the right of considering the discrepancies which may arise between the doctrine and the practice of the Church. The administration of the Church belongs, like all administration, to the state authorities—a proposition which at once overthrows the whole fabric of the Church of Rome. But, the theses add, if the state authorities go beyond the ordinance of Christ, let them be deposed. The disputation ended with a complete victory for Zwingli: the Reformation was formally adopted for the territory of Zurich." Pope Adrian VI., thinking to silence this enemy of the hierarchy, offered him everything but the papal chair, yet

the Reformer scorned the bribes and stood unmoved in his lot.

Although the Reformed churches did not agree as regards certain tenets which are styled non-essentials, the acceptance of them not being necessary to salvation, yet they were a unit so far as related to fundamental truth. They planted themselves on the Rock of Ages. They discarded the philosophies of the most cultured age which knew not Christ—philosophies which Rome accepted. They gloried only in the cross. The Reformers in Germany, Switzerland, Holland, France and England all took the attitude of the wilderness preacher, their backs on Athens, their faces toward Jerusalem, and, moved with profoundest pity for the lost, exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." This was the burden of Zwingle's preaching.

Of his ministry in Zurich our Reformer says: "By no cunningly devised modes of address, but in the use of simple words of our own country's native growth, I have led the people to the knowledge of their disease, following our Lord's example, who commenced from this point. . . . I have earnestly exhorted the people to hold fast the glory of our profession, having a 'great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, who is passed into the heavens,' and not to seek honor one of another—a practice which led away the Jews from faith in Christ. As much as in me lieth I withdraw men from confidence in any creature, to the only true God, and Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, in whom whosoever believeth shall never die. With all the earnestness of which I am capable I urge them to seek pardon from

Him who invites us to turn to him even when we have sinned, saying, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.' This word of his I so firmly believe that should circumstances require I think I have no need of either bishop or priest to make satisfaction for me, for whom Christ hath done that, who 'gave himself an offering for us, and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood.' I exhort men to pray without ceasing, but to do it with the spirit and the heart; 'in spirit and in truth,' as our Lord's words are; and to persevere therein with an importunity which might seem to be wearisome, according to the parable of the widow."

Zwingle's statements of evangelical truth were calm, clear and logical. His appeal was always made to the word of God. Less impetuous than Luther, seldom moving great assemblies by that impassioned oratory which distinguished the Wittenberg monk, and never reaching, in defence of the truth, that moral grandeur which immortalized the latter at the Diet of Worms, in some respects he was a safer guide. He did not agree with Luther's views of the Lord's Supper. Whilst Luther rejected the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation, the conversion of the bread and wine in the sacrament into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, the waving of a priest's hand turning mere emblems into a very God—a doctrine alike contradictory to the Scriptures and to common sense—yet, as is well known, he held a view which closely approximates to transubstantiation and is less comprehensible—commonly called consubstantiation. He maintained that the bread and the wine remain unchanged, but that there is present with

them the substance of the body of Christ, literally received by the communicant.

Zwingle taught that the elements in the Eucharist are simply emblems of the body and the blood of Christ. The expression, "This is my body," is not to be literally interpreted any more than the like expressions, "I am the door" and "I am the true vine." The bread signifies or represents the body; the wine, the blood of our Lord. In this view Zwingle was undoubtedly correct, and Luther's theory of consubstantiation was wrong. So say most of the Reformed churches of to-day. Yet Zwingle, in his reaction from Rome as touching this sacrament, erred in making it simply a memorial. It is one of the most effective means of grace, and something more is intended by our Confession, which, in harmony with the view of other evangelical churches, teaches that in the sacrament we receive, not corporally but spiritually, the body and blood of our Lord. Faith feeds upon Christ. The soul is nourished. The devout communicant goes up to higher grounds. The graces of the Spirit grow stronger as he communes with Christ in this beautiful and significant rite of Christ's own appointment. Zwingle rejected the mass, which claimed to be a repetition of Christ's sacrifice. The offering made on Calvary was made for all time. The mass degrades the cross; it makes the priest a savior. It places the altar of human creation between the soul and the Lamb of God. Zwingle presented his views in the great council. His friend Oswald Myconius and prominent men of Zurich expressed their accord with him. They asked that the Lord's Supper, as instituted by Christ and observed by the apostles, should be re-

stored in its simplicity and spiritual significance. The council was deeply moved both by the words and by the spirit of the petitions. It was a solemn and interesting day in the history of the Church. The council decided that the mass should be suppressed and the Lord's Supper celebrated in accordance with apostolic usage.

On the following day, which was "Holy Thursday," the old cathedral witnessed the re-establishment of the sacrament. It was like a passage from a sepulchre cold, dark and offensive into the genial sunlight, the air fragrant with flowers and resonant with song. It seemed as if the darkness of ages had been cleft and the light of apostolic days had shone through. The living Christ again sat at the board, and John leaned upon his bosom. For three consecutive days the Supper was celebrated, the communicants being divided into three classes—the young, the middle-aged and the old. The younger people shed tears of joy. The older men and women turned their eyes toward Christ's home, now in sight. We sit in the radiance of that day which gilded the hill-tops and flooded the valleys of the Switzerland.

Zwingle and Luther met at the council at Marburg. The landgrave of Hesse had convened these men and other representatives of the conflicting views touching the Lord's Supper. They agreed on all other points. The controversy was prolonged. Luther insisted on a real presence in the sacrament. He was immovable. Zwingle was firm, but milder than the sturdy Saxon. At length, agreement being impossible, he said with much gentleness and affection, "Martin Luther, let us confess our union in all things in which we agree, and, as for the rest, let us remember that we are brothers, with the



same cause at heart. While we all hold the grand doctrine of salvation by faith, we cannot consent to differ on minor points." The landgrave joined in the appeal. There was an anxious pause. Will Luther yield? Zwingli advanced toward the latter, great tears rolling down his careworn face, and extended his hand. Luther refused it. The principle of Christian union, agreement in essential truths and liberty of thought in other things was rejected by the man who by the opposite course might have added additional lustre to his name and aided that Reformation of which he was the glorious sun. The Swiss Reformers departed in sadness, yet uttering no words of reproach. We admire Zwingli's spirit at Marburg, and the memory of it mantles his later faults.

Rome exulted over the disputes of the Reformers. The Reformation suffered a temporary check. Many who were favorably disposed to it feared such divergence of sentiment as would multiply organic divisions in the Protestant Church, and so strengthen the power of the papists, who were professedly a unit in their beliefs. Yet these unhappy divisions were no doubt overruled for good. The truth was conserved by them. The Church of the Reformation escaped the snares which beset the Roman hierarchy. The latter had grown to be an ecclesiastical monopoly. It arrogated to itself a blasphemous infallibility. It trampled on all freedom of thought and hurried the heretic to the block or the stake.

Truth is many sided. It is broad and high. No mind can comprehend its fullness nor set in order its varied relations. Luther's consubstantiation may have embodied an important truth, as did Zwingli's view of



the sacrament. The one magnified the presence of Christ; the other simplified the ordinance, and removed it, further than did Luther's, from the errors of Rome. And now, in the prevailing belief of Christendom, the erroneous elements have been eliminated from both, and we have attained a more scriptural apprehension of the nature and design of this divine ordinance. The Rhone and the Arve of the Reformation, mutually repellant for a time, have become a more harmonious unity, clarified in the passage and more helpful to the spiritual life.

At this stage, the two Reformers maintaining divergent views, Rome would gladly have received Zwingli back to the bosom of the Church. Papists said Luther was past reclamation, but the Swiss heretic might be restored. Might not a bribe avail? They exhibited the regalia of an imposing hierarchy, and intimated that a bishop's mitre or a cardinal's hat should crown the head of the returning prodigal. But Zwingli was immovable as his Saxon brother. Then Lucerne hung him in effigy, and so predicted an ignominious death. But he remained firm, trusting in God. Hottinger, who had denounced the mass as a lie, was beheaded. Still, Zwingli was unimpaired, ready to preach the truth with holy boldness, and ready, too, to wear a martyr's crown. He simplified the worship of the Reformed Church. Pagan features were cast off; crucifixes and pictures were removed from the walls of the churches. Even the organ, which Rome had abused, was rejected. Appeals to the senses and whatever promoted mere sentimentality were discontinued. Thereafter the people transacted more directly with God. Worship became less æsthetic but more spiritual, and the Church went up to higher plains.

But the way was not uniformly smooth nor the ascent continuous. Zwingli kept his eyes on the heights which seemed to touch the jasper walls, but there were rough places in the road, sharp stones that pierced the feet and dark ravines through which he traveled wearily on. Soon these troubles culminated in war. The five cantons of Switzerland which adhered to the Romish Church were arrayed against the two cantons which supported the Reformation—Zurich and Berne. The papists demanded submission to the pope. An alarming message was sent to the pulpit of the cathedral in Zurich. Zwingli heard the mutterings of the approaching storm and the tramp of bloodthirsty foes. The red banner is already moving northward. The cathedral seems to grow strangely dark. The place is solemn as eternity. What shall be done? Does Zwingli waver? Not by a hair's breadth. Lifting his hand toward heaven he said, "Never will I deny my Redeemer." The scene was sublime. It links itself with the grander attitude of Luther in the presence of Charles V. and under the shadow of the pontifical sword. He left the pulpit, and never returned to it. He had unwisely counseled war. His weapons hereafter are to be carnal rather than spiritual. It was a sad mistake. The great council assembled at Zurich. It vacillated, then decided. The gauntlet was thrown down. The night set in. The elements were in commotion. The tempest rolled its thunders across the dark fields of the sky, and the sobbings of women and children mingled with the wail of the storm. The ringing of bells—a call not to worship, but to war—only seemed to heighten the universal terror.

The next morning Zwingli mounted his war-steed. He believed God called him, and he was prepared for the worst. If the Reformation must fall on the battle-field, he would fall with it. Without it life would be a burden only and the earth accursed. As he rode down the street his wife looked on with eyes undimmed. She had long been in the school of suffering, and was inured to pain. She accepted this new trial as direct from God, and meekly said, "Holy Father, thy will be done." A little band of Zurichers, not over five hundred in all, and Zwingli their captain, went forth to the unhappy strife. Over the stormy heights and adown the valleys they urged their way. They ascended the Albis. They hastened through Husen. They entered the deep woods beyond it. Their foes were concealed, watching their advance. The guns of the papists were lowered. A calm voice sounded down the line, "In the name of the Holy Trinity, of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, of the Holy Mother of God and of all the heavenly host, fire!" Brave Zurichers bit the dust. Their surviving brothers were exhorted to quit themselves like men. Zwingli, as their captain, bade them be strong. "Warriors!" he cried, "fear nothing. Our cause is good. Commend yourselves to God." The battle grew fierce. Guns answered guns. Before the fire of the Waldstettes the Zurichers fell as the corn before the scythe. Lavater, their general, was in the ditch. Gerold Meyer of Knonau, son of Anna Zwingli, slept his last sleep. John Haller, the brave preacher and courageous soldier, and many of the mighty men of Zurich were slain. Zwingli in his warrior dress bends over a dying man, bidding him in this dark hour

trust in Him who conquered death. As he spoke a stone which the enemy threw smote him to the ground. He rose as the blows thickened, only to fall again. Then a Waldstette thrust him with a lance, and as he saw the life-current flowing out and down, he exclaimed, "They may indeed kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul." The words had scarce passed his lips when he fell to the earth, his face toward heaven. The enemy pursued the Zurichers, trampling on the bodies of their dead. The battle at Cappel has issued, for the Protestant cantons, in an inglorious defeat. Their leaders are slain. The flower of their youth cover the high places. Their widows and children mourn and refuse to be comforted. Zwingli, the great and beloved, the Luther of Helvetia, his name the synonym of moral grandeur, whose faults declared him human and magnified the grace of God which wrought in and through him, has perished by the sword. Ages will pass before Switzerland shall know his like again. Only eight-and-forty years of age, not robed in the garment of peace, but in a martial cloak, on his head a helmet and in his hand a sword, he passes through death to the invisible beyond. Would that he had gone, as did Luther who followed him, from the pulpit to the grave, or from loving ministries among his Zurich flock to the green pastures of the better land! But God otherwise permitted. And from the shadow of the pear tree under which he died and was burned to ashes there ring out to the earth's limits and down to our happier age the words of Martin Luther, a sad reproof and an impressive warning: "Christians fight not with sword and arquebuse, but with sufferings and the cross," or that diviner word of the Prince of peace,

"They that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

There was great lamentation in Zurich when it was announced, "Zwingle is dead." Anna, the sorrow-burdened widow, with her children about her, bowed in uncontrollable grief at her Saviour's feet and besought strength to bear her load. And when the cry went down the streets, "Avengers of Zwingle's death, on to Albis!" an excited throng hastened toward the battle-ground of Cappel. But better counsels prevailed. The conquerors entered into a treaty with the vanquished cantons, by which was granted to the latter the undisturbed possession of the faith for which they had so bravely fought. And thus, though at a fearful cost, the Reformation in Zurich and Berne held its ground. Purged by fire and baptized with blood, it marched forth to grander triumphs on the fields of truth. The gospel of peace spread abroad. Down the valleys it extended its benignant sway. In Tockenbergl and on all the Alpine slopes it reared its sanctuaries, and simple spires pointed heavenward. Beyond the limits of the Switzer's mountain-girt home, it traveled westward, over the plains of beautiful France and across the Channel to the British Isles, whence, in another age, rebaptized with blood, it crossed the Atlantic to dwell amid primeval forests along our eastern coast, pursuing thence its triumphant way to the Valley of the Mississippi; nay, far beyond it, to that "continuous wood where flows the Oregon."

Thanks be unto God for the precious faith he restored to the race by the hands of Luther and Zwingle; for the religious freedom of our times; for all the fruits of righteousness which beautify our own and other lands,

and for the blessed hope which adds lustre to our days and illumines our nights, that Jesus, the Sin-atoner and Advocate with the Father, will come again and make this sin-defiled, woe-disfigured earth his own fair earth again!

O thou blessed Christ, only Head of the Church, only Saviour of the lost, hasten it in thy time! Amen.

CALVIN IN FRANCE.



*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ : according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."*

EPH. I : 3, 4.

*"The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men attending the will of God revealed in his word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God ; and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel."*

CON. FAITH, CHAP. III. SEC. viii.

## CALVIN IN FRANCE.

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WE are to study the life of John Calvin, the great French Reformer, the expounder and defender of that system of faith which bears his name, the system set forth by Christ and his apostles, which had become obscured by the erroneous teachings of the papacy, and was brought to light again in the sixteenth century with a clearness of annunciation and a measure of spiritual power which made it appear almost a new revelation from heaven.

For centuries the Church in France, as in the remoter East, had been departing from the simplicity of the Gospel. The fundamental doctrine of Christianity—justification by faith—was fading from the minds of men, and a blind legal obedience had been substituted for the righteousness of our Lord. The intercession of saints was practically extolled above the mediation of Christ; the pope was lifted to the dignity of a god, and a superstitious worship took the place of spiritual culture. The priesthood was ignorant, depraved and corrupting. The people were sunk in all manner of vice, and the world seemed drifting away into heathenism, dark and hopeless, whilst a material cross, its spiritual significance almost or quite forgotten, lifted to the dome of a Christless religion, intercepted the light of the Sun of righteousness and threw its deadly shadow along the track of

the ages. There remained, it is true, reminiscences of the apostolic faith. There were shreds of truth woven in the winding-sheet of death. A few were able to discriminate between the true and the false, and now and then appeared examples of piety which shone like tapers in the midst of the darkness, yet failed to disperse the gloom.

But God has not forgotten his covenant. The world has been purchased by the blood of his Son, and Christ shall inherit it when the fullness of time is come. The truth which is hidden in the imperishable Word shall assert its divine power. The light which struggles through the leaden clouds shall rend them, and the now invisible heavens shall yet flood the earth with glory.

When the monk of Erfurt was girding himself for his life-work God gave to the world another Reformer, whose mission it was to do for France what Luther did for Germany, and to carry on the Reformation which Luther began. John Calvin was born at Noyon in Picardy, in the north of France, on the 10th of July, 1509. His father was procurator fiscal of the county of Noyon; his mother, Joanna Franc, was reputed to be one of the most beautiful women of her day. John was the second son, and probably had four brothers. There seems to have been in the family a proclivity to *heresy*, as Rome would style the Protestant faith, for an older brother, when dying, refused the sacrament of extreme unction, and for his impiety received an ignominious burial, whilst the younger members of the family were in accord with the illustrious Reformer.

In the seventeenth year of his age we find Calvin in the college of La Marche, in Paris. Here he attracted

the attention of the distinguished professor Mathurin Cordier, and between the two there grew up a strong and enduring attachment honorable to both. They were much together during the intervals of study, conversing in the library, walking the college halls or communing with nature in the fields or forest beyond. There was much in the pupil's sedate deportment, his thirst for knowledge and his maturity of mind, as well as in his quiet and confiding disposition, to call forth the respectful regard of the teacher. This association of Calvin with a man of great learning, refined taste and dignity of character had a marked influence on the young student, and he carried with him through all after years grateful remembrance of his college days and the friendship of Cordier.

But the time came when the teacher and his protégé must part. The separation was a sorrowful one. Calvin was intended for a priest, and he must go elsewhere to complete his preparation for holy orders. His connection thereafter was with Montaigu College in the same city. Here he outstripped all his fellow-students; his genius surprised his teachers. His familiarity with the great names and works of the Augustinian age, and his rapid advancement in all branches of study, were perhaps without a parallel in the history of this Parisian college. But he did not seem conscious of his own superiority; he was diffident, retiring, to a fault. He was far removed from levity and from all the vices into which young men were apt to fall. He seemed to move in a sphere of human excellence that comparatively few entered. But he was by no means a Christian. Attached to the Romish Church, bound hand and foot by

its superstitions, attentive to all the ceremonies of a cold, wearisome ritual, he was reputed eminently pious. His religion was self-righteousness. His life was death.

But in the course of time the light which had arisen on Germany advanced westward. Mountains were no barrier to its progress. National lines could set no limits to its onward course. The fame of Luther and Melancthon reached Paris. Their names were spoken, at least in whispers, within the walls of the Sorbonne and Montaigu. The strongest intellects were the first to grasp the great principles of the Reformation and to experience their power.

Young Calvin turned his face toward the East, and with an eagle eye looked steadily and inquiringly on the strange light along the horizon. One day, in this attitude of inquiry, there stood beside him one of his kinsmen, Robert Pierre Olivétan, a convert to the Protestant faith. "There are many false religions," said Olivétan, "and only one true." Calvin replied that the proposition was self-evident. "The false," continued his friend, "are those which men have invented, according to which we are saved by our own works; the true is that which comes from God, according to which salvation is given freely from on high." Calvin looked bewildered, but weighed every word as Olivétan proceeded: "True religion is not that infinite mass of ceremonies and observances which the Church imposes upon its followers and which separates souls from Christ. O my dear friend, leave off shouting with the papists, The Fathers! the Doctors! the Church! and listen instead to the prophets and apostles. Study the Scriptures." But Calvin resisted the strange heresy. He believed the foundations

of popery were on a rock, and sooner would the dome of the heavens dissolve than the religion of his fathers pass away. But the light which he saw above the hills is traveling upward. It is a solemn time. The words of his friend wake strange echoes in the dimly-lighted chambers of his soul, and will not be stilled. By and by the earth appears to move, and then to sink beneath his feet. He begins to wake as if from a horrid dream. Things are not what they seem. Like the monk of Erfurt, he retires to his chamber. The Holy Spirit convinces him of sin. He is alarmed as he looks at himself in the light of God's holiness and trembles with apprehensions of eternity. He knows his relations to God are wrong; that he is the servant of sin; that he has no spiritual acquaintance with Christ; that he is unprepared for life and unfit for death. His spiritual guides—blind leaders, all of them—bade him submit to the teachings of the Church and go on as he had begun. If his sins troubled him, he had but to confess to a priest and receive absolution. If the load returned and was heavier than before, then there was another resort which would not fail him—penances, fastings and prolonged prayer to the saints. He obeyed. His faith in the Church had been strong. His connection could not be readily destroyed. His religion was not like a garment which is put on and thrown off at pleasure. Like a tree which is not torn from the earth except by a resistless storm, with roots lacerated and bleeding, so Calvin could be removed from the old faith in which he had been firmly grounded only by a power which was mightier than man's; and even that he would resist until every former connection was destroyed and a religion more in



harmony with the word of God and human need was discovered. Weeks went on—weeks of anxious inquiry after the truth. Calvin is walking thoughtfully along a street in Paris. He is approaching the great cathedral of Notre Dame, when he observes a vast assemblage of people jostling each other in the wide court before him. A noted priest has been charged with heresy. False to the Church, he must die. There is a rope about his neck and men are leading him to the place of execution. They bind him to the stake, and this man, who had been received to the confidence of kings and had done service for the Church of Rome, because he will not bow the knee to Mary and worship the Host, is burned alive. The glare of that fire shone on Calvin's face, and that day Rome unwittingly cast the hangman's rope around the neck of her own superstition. All thought of being a priest is now dismissed. He had received the tonsure and had been appointed chaplain of the cathedral of Noyon at the early age of twelve, but the father, through whose influence these churchly distinctions had been conferred, now consents to his son's prosecuting the study of the law, and Calvin goes to Orléans, where he becomes the student of Pierre l'Étoile, the most distinguished jurist of France. The genius of the pupil could not escape the notice of the discerning L'Étoile. The latter loved the youth with almost a womanly tenderness, and, great as he was himself, felt honored in having for his student a young man who, he thought, might yet be one of the leading scholars and jurists of the age.

At Orléans, Calvin formed the acquaintance of Melchior Wolmar, a teacher of Greek, whose influence over him was marked and lasting. Under the instructions



of Wolmar, Calvin became master of the language in which the New Testament was written, and so was being prepared to become the most distinguished commentator of the Scriptures in that or any succeeding century. Here observe the wisdom of divine Providence. At Orléans, with Pierre l'Étoile to instruct him in the principles of the law and Wolmar in the greater truths of revelation and experience, Calvin is being educated for a position of usefulness and power in which, as a civil magistrate and a teacher of theology, he helped on the Reformation to that glorious triumph which was ever after the joy of the Church and the wonder of the world. Without Calvin the gospel might not have crossed the Rhine or the Reformation might have languished in the land of its birth. But God raised him up to execute his own purposes of grace, and led him, step by step, along what at first seemed a tortuous path, but was, in fact, the only possible way by which he could have been fitted for that work which opened all the avenues of the world to the onward march of the truth. At Orléans the highest honors were conferred on the young Calvin, and at the age of twenty-two—the same at which Martin Luther was made doctor of philosophy—he was pronounced the most learned man in Europe, and, a little later, “of Rome, in its decline, the greatest dread.” Here he grew in the knowledge of Christ. The mists of error which had hung over him were passing away. The Sun of righteousness shone with increased power, and he rejoiced in God his Saviour with exceeding joy. He referred his salvation to sovereign grace. He felt that he deserved nothing, for he had nothing. Christ was his all in all. “I have not merited thee by my

love, O Christ," he said ; " thou hast loved me of thy free will. I come to thee naked and empty, and I find everything here." And kneeling by the cross, on his head the droppings of the Saviour's blood, he consecrated himself and his all to Christ.

Calvin's stay at Orléans was suddenly terminated by the dangerous illness of his father. He spent a season under the roof of his childhood, and after the partial recovery of his father went to Bourges. Here he again met Wolmar, the Greek professor, who supplied him with the writings of Luther, Melanchthon and other German Reformers, and subsequently urged him to become himself a preacher of the resurrected faith. Calvin doubted his fitness for such a work. Who is sufficient for these things? But he became a teacher without designing it. Groups of friends clustered about him and listened with delight to his exposition of the Scriptures. Then he was induced to visit the neighboring towns and villages, and he roused the indignation of the priests by his bold denunciation of the errors of the Church. He was sowing the seed from which sprang the three thousand Reformed churches of France in his own day.

Whilst thus engaged there came a message from Noyon announcing his father's death. He left Bourges with much sorrow, and his sudden departure cast a gloom over the little groups of Christians to whom he had preached " none but Christ." All the incidents of his life which we shall relate had an important bearing on his relations to his subsequent career of usefulness. Returning homeward, he passed through Paris. Again the fires of persecution were raging. Berquin, a learned

noble, had been charged with heresy and cast into prison. The day of his trial is come. His heresy is proved. The sentence passed upon him is humiliating, but bravely borne; thus it runs: "You shall be led to the front of the church of Notre Dame, where you shall do penance to God and the glorious Virgin his Mother. Afterward you shall have your tongue pierced, that instrument of unrighteousness by which you have so grievously sinned. Lastly, you shall be taken to the prison of Monsieur de Paris [the bishop] and be shut up there all your life between four walls of stone, and we forbid you to be supplied either with books to read or pen and ink to write." The queen of Navarre had interceded for him, but in vain. It was evident that Rome intended nothing less than his death. A little later armed men entered his cell. He knew their errand; he was ready to suffer for Christ; he walked forth with a firm step and an unfaltering faith which took hold on heaven. Arrived at the place of execution, a rope was cast about his neck, and when strangled they cast his dead body into the flames. The queen of Navarre wept; Christians who had thrown off the chain of a corrupt religion realized their danger, but said, "We are ready to die. We set our eyes on the life to come." Beyond the smoke of the burning fagots they saw a kingdom of righteousness and peace, and were anxious to enter it, even though the way led through a girdle of fire. Rome thought by persecution to throw an invincible barrier across the path of the Reformation. But from the ashes of each martyr there sprung up a host of Christians, full armed and ready for the fight. The Lord of battles was gathering his

forces. His enemies may have seemed to triumph, but afterward they were either converted to the truth or made to lick the dust.

Calvin went forth from the capital more fully resolved than ever before to defend the principles for which noble saints had dared to die. He spent a few months at Noyon, visited his father's grave, walked thoughtfully along the well-worn paths of early years, went, in sadness relieved by hope, to the old cathedral where the Virgin Mary obscured her Son; then returned to Paris.

Now there arise questions of duty which must be prayerfully met. What is to be the work of his life? The way does not seem clear. There is a cloud upon it, and he can take only one step at a time. But he at length determines to enter upon the work of an evangelist. He preached Christ whenever and wherever an opportunity offered—now in the house of some noble Parisian, then to a little group in the gardens, on the banks of the Seine or under the shadow of the college walls. The people said of the gospel, "It is always a fire, but when Calvin explains it the fire shines with unusual brilliancy." Still, comparatively few knew the retiring youth. He walked the streets with bowed head, in thoughtfulness passing quietly and unobserved. The carriages of the nobility as they rolled by arrested the attention of the loungers at the cafés or in the gardens of the Palais Royal. Some great pageant swept down the boulevards and the onlookers huzzahed. But who knew John Calvin? Who cared for him? Yet a greater than Francis I. is he. There goes the man who shall yet stir all Europe with his eloquence—who shall enkindle in beautiful France and in the valleys

overshadowed by the Alps a light that shall enlighten the world—who shall lift the cross of Christ higher than the dome of St. Peter's or of Notre Dame, that the sin-burdened may see it. His name shall live until the end of time.

In his preaching Calvin gave much prominence to the justice of God, whilst he did not fail to emphasize the divine love. God was recognized as the moral Ruler as well as a tender Father. The guilt of sin exceeds human comprehension. The perfections of God and the integrity of the divine government require its punishment. At the same time, the death of Christ satisfies the broken law, is sufficient for the chief of sinners and avails for all who believe.

The exercise of grace was sovereign. His doctrine of predestination seemed to conflict with free agency, but the two were as reconcilable in his judgment as are the two natures in the person of Christ. He cut at the roots of self-righteousness, self-reliance and natural ability, and made salvation dependent upon the sovereign and abundant mercy of God exercised through Christ his only Son. There was a strength and a restfulness in his theological system which Pelagianism never knew. The eternal throne was surrounded with a moral glory which men could not have borne had not God spread his cloud upon it and suffered his divine clemency to shine through. There is power in great ideas. They mould character and life. Hence Calvinists in every age have been the strong, potential men in Church and State—men of moral stamina, brave defenders of the truth, leaders in every true reform, holding communion with Him who is invisible, their works wrought under his

inspection and in the strength which comes from above. They were the men who planted the Church on the British Isles, who suffered for righteousness' sake at Smithfield and on the Oxford common and in the hill-country of Scotland; the men who came to the wilds of America that they might receive from God the pattern of the tabernacle; who laid the foundations of civil and religious freedom in the New World, and with faces turned toward heaven, fearing nothing so much as sin, seeking grace and guidance and power from above, passed quietly and trustfully westward, filling the solitudes with villages, turning the wilderness into fruitful fields, establishing churches, schools and beneficent government, and advancing every interest which enriches life in both worlds. This is said to the glory of God, who employs human agencies, and oftentimes the humblest, to consummate his holy purpose. In view of this it has well been remarked that "to have been the spiritual father of the Puritans for three hundred years is itself evidence of moral and intellectual excellence, and will link the name of Calvin with some of the greatest movements that have marked our modern civilization."

Recognizing Calvin's power, efforts were made at an early period to detain him in the Church of Rome. His friends would make him vicar-general with episcopal power. That position might be only the first round in the ladder up which he might go to the highest office the hierarchy knew. What a field in which to exercise his genius, to command the reverence of men, to gratify a natural love of power! Will he be ensnared by such a bait? No. The Vatican and St. Peter's have no attractions for him. A nobler destiny is possible than



that the pontificate offers. He has covenanted to live for Christ, to declare the truth, to seek the deliverance of the bound. His mission lies outside the pale of the Romish Church. Reformation within it is impossible. It is God's purpose that he shall ally himself with the little band of Christians hidden in the valleys of Piedmont who have never bowed the knee to Baal, holding the truth as it is in Jesus, waiting there for one anointed of the Lord who shall lead them forth into broader fields and on to more glorious triumphs.

Soon, in disguise, moving cautiously along unfrequented streets, Calvin makes his way out of Paris, an exile from the city he has loved, in which he had hoped to labor undisturbed and long. He traveled many weary, anxious leagues until he came to the venerable city of Angoulême. Here lived his friend Louis du Fillet, canon of the cathedral, who occupied the ancestral mansion and inherited a library which was one of the most valuable in France. Calvin received a cordial welcome from his friend. In the hospitable mansion, near the cathedral, overlooking the valley through which flowed the Charente, he found a quiet retreat. The cries of martyrs had died away when the spires of Paris faded from his sight. Here in the great library he was happy. His mind could feed on the treasures of the ages and commune with the great whose works outlived themselves. There were nights that he refused sleep. Por-ing over musty tomes, the light of his lone lamp shone out into the darkness, burning on until the returning sun gilded the cathedral dome. Then a hasty meal and back again to his books, digging as for hid treasure, resting not until the object of his search was found.



Again, we find him discoursing to a group of intellectual men on the great themes of the gospel. They pronounce him an incomparable preacher; "none can equal him," they say, "in loftiness of language, conciseness of arrangement and majesty of style." It was observed that he did not simply unfold some particular doctrine of the gospel in a fullness before unknown, but that his comprehensive and logical mind swept a wide circuit of truth and arranged its parts in their mutual relations and dependences, so forming a complete system of faith and a divine unity. Dignitaries of the Church became his disciples, and as he discoursed to them in Latin, the language of the Church, they were drawn into closer sympathy with the preacher and his faith. The more rigid Romanists began to be alarmed. The man who could wield a power so irresistible, even over those who had sworn fealty to the Roman See, was a dangerous teacher. France had reason to dread his presence more than that of the Saracens or the house of Austria who had once and again thundered at her gates.

From Angoulême, Calvin went to Nérac, where he met Le Févre, a man of weak presence, but of strong intellect, great learning and unswerving devotion to the doctrine of justification by faith, in the advocacy of which he had anticipated the Reformer of Germany. Calvin regarded the old man with a deep and affectionate interest, but went in advance of him in his idea of Reform. He insisted that the truth and vital godliness demanded separation from the Church. He would pull down the cathedrals of a corrupt religion and erect a better sanctuary, from which should be for ever excluded all the errors in doctrine and in practice that had emascu-

ted the Church of his fathers. Le Févre surveyed the youth with a look of mingled surprise and hope, saying, "Young man, you will one day be a powerful instrument in the Lord's hand. The world will obstinately resist Jesus Christ; but stand firm on that Rock, and many will be broken by it. God will make use of you to restore the kingdom of heaven in France." It was a touching sight—the aged Le Févre gathering the drapery of the night about him, soon to lie down in death; the young Calvin girding on his armor and stepping out into the arena of religious strife to do battle for Christ and his truth. They parted in tears, and met no more until they clasped hands in heaven.

Subsequently, joined by Du Fillet, the young canon of Angoulême, our Reformer went to Poitiers, where some of the noblest men of the realm gathered about him and conversed with him touching the questions which were agitating the Church. He boldly denounced the blasphemous dogma of transubstantiation, and exalted spiritual fellowship with Christ. At the same time he so magnified the ordinance of the Lord's Supper as to receive the designation of "the sacramentarian." "Luther saw the truth," he said, "but he is like those who are walking through a long and winding road: they perceive afar the dim glimmer of a lamp, by means of which they can grope their way along the path they must follow. Zwingle approached the light, but, like those who rush too hastily to good, he went beyond it." Rejecting the doctrine of Rome, that the wafer of the sacrament is transmuted into the body and blood of Christ, and repudiating Luther's theory of consubstantiation, which he could not comprehend, but which

seemed to savor of a real corporeal presence, he avoided the other extreme of Zwingle, which made the Supper a mere memorial of Christ's death, and took from it much of its sweetness and power ; maintaining the view which now obtains in nearly all branches of the Reformed Church, and is thus expressed in the Westminster Confession of Faith : "They that worthily communicate in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, do therein feed upon the body and blood of Christ, not after a corporal or carnal, but in a spiritual manner ; yet truly and really, while by faith they receive and apply unto themselves Christ crucified and all the benefits of his death."

About this time certain questions were raised as to the relations of science and the Church. The papacy had set its heel on popular learning. The Reformation favored learning ; it clasped hands with science. It said to the latter, "Study God in his works whilst we seek him in his word. Nature and revelation are in accord and mutually helpful. Piety will help the scientist in his search for truth, and the discoveries he makes in the realm of nature, in the earth and in the skies shall enlarge the Christian's conception of the infinite Creator." From that day to this the Protestant religion has been the friend of science, opposing it only when it has trampled on the word of God, readily accepting its principles and facts when they have been in harmony with revelation. Although these may have involved the sacrifice of traditional faith, they have never militated against the great essentials of the Christian system. They never can. The same God, and only God, who laid the foundations of the earth, who through the operation

of his own laws arranged the strata of the solid globe from the granite rock up to the fruit-bearing alluvial, and set the lights in heaven to rule the day and the night, bringing forth Mazzaroth in his season and guiding Arcturus with his sons, wrote each page of this revelation through the agency of inspired men; and it is evident that he can never contradict himself. A personal God, Creator and Preserver of all things; a divine Saviour, arrayed in the robe of human flesh; salvation for all who will believe in the sacrifice of the cross; the Bible a revelation of God clearer than that of nature, yet in harmony with it; a future state of rewards and punishments,—these great principles of the Christian system shall stand more immovable than Gibraltar and more enduring than the stars, bearing us up in our goings and girding our way to a better future.

Calvin, accompanied by Du Fillet, traveled through the beautiful yet benighted France, kindling here and there a light which burned on when he passed to regions beyond. He encountered spiritualists and pantheists, with whom he measured swords, vanquishing them with the truth, preaching Christ, proclaiming him the Light of the world and the only blessedness of man.

Again for a little season in Paris, he met for the first time, Michael Servetus, a young man of his own age, whose wide learning, and especially his acquaintance with natural science, had made him a name among the scholars of that day. Servetus denied the Trinity and mocked at the doctrine of justification by faith. Calvin reasoned with him. "He sought," as he expressed it, "to bring to the Spaniard such sentiments that all pious men might take him affectionately by the hand." They

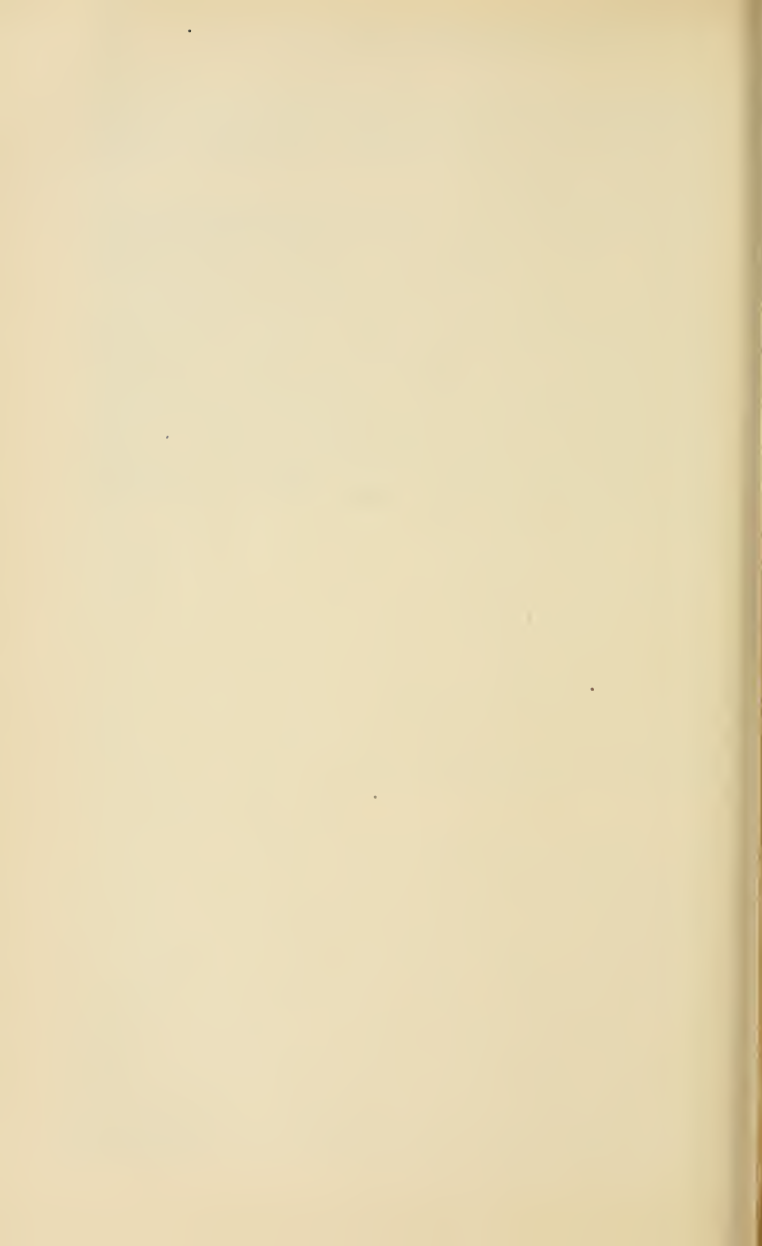
arranged for a private conference, but Servetus failed to appear. Years went on; they met in a trying period of the Reformation in the city beside Lake Lemman, and their names are associated in the annals of that greatest revolution that ever shook the earth and sent its reverberating echoes through the heavens.

The fires of persecution were rekindled in Paris. Calvin and Du Fillet determined to seek an asylum in Germany. They secured a small sum of money, sufficient to meet the expenses of the journey, and after a series of painful experiences arrived at Strassburg, strangers in the capital city of Alsace, gazing with wonder on the great cathedral which towered into the sky and threw its deep shadow across their path. Their thoughts went to France. A feeling of homesickness came over them, and yet they breathed more freely in the air which carried in it sweet whispers of the gospel—the first breathings of the great choral anthem which should sound down the valleys of the Rhine and the Rhone and ascend the Alps on its way to meet the songs of angels as they announced the breaking over Europe of the Reformation day.

Here our narrative must close for the present. We have seen the young man of Noyon advancing step by step from the darkness into the light. We have noticed the strange yet wise providences of God by which he was being prepared for his work. “A man’s heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps.” The lawyer of Orléans is to be the theologian of the sixteenth century. The chaplain of the Noyon cathedral, who might have climbed into St. Peter’s chair, is to be one of God’s most honored instruments in the restora-

tion of the apostolic faith. He shall carry on the work Luther began. He shall lay stone upon stone and rear the dome of the temple of truth, which shall remain until time shall end.

The faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God is seen in all this. He will preserve his Church and perpetuate the truth. Out of the darkness shall come a great light. The little flock hidden for ages among the valleys of Northern Italy and concealed in the caves of Central Europe shall come forth from its seclusion at God's appointed time to claim and to possess the earth for Christ, and transfer the crown from the head of the apostate Leo to the Lamb of God, whose right it is to reign.





CALVIN IN GENEVA.

*“ Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.”*

2 COR. 6 : 17.

*“ Religious worship is to be given to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; and to him alone ; not to angels, saints, or any other creature : and since the fall, not without a mediator ; nor in the mediation of any other but of Christ alone.”*

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. XXI. SEC. ii.

## CALVIN IN GENEVA.

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WE are to continue our sketch of the life-work of John Calvin. We parted with him at Strassburg, There, a fugitive from persecution, attended by his friend Du Fillet, the pious canon of Angoulême, he thought to prepare himself more fully for the work of an evangelist.

He is still a young man, twenty-five years of age, an intellectual prodigy. He does not seem to have toiled upward to this distinction by the slow stages through which most men attain intellectual eminence and power, but to have gone thither by a single stride. The sun was in the zenith even before men looked for the dawn. In him was realized the old dream of mythology concerning Minerva—his greatness a creation rather than a growth. Yet this is only a partial truth. Born a genius, he was one of the severest students that any age has produced. His power of will carried him on through all difficulties and over all obstacles.

If he turned his back on France and sought seclusion, it was only because he hoped to live and do great things for God. He does not seem to have feared death. He would have gone calmly to the stake if the Lord had so appointed. But he believed he was called to a pro-

tracted strife, not to early martyrdom ; and he put on his coat of mail, burnished his armor and made ready for the fight.

There is a portrait of the Reformer, traditionally correct, which is kept in a church on the Rhine. It represents him as a young man and with a comely visage. He was of small stature ; his face was pale and thin, its expression intellectual and pensive ; his forehead was lofty, his nose prominent, his mouth well formed, and his eyes were the windows of far-reaching thought, seemingly fixed on objects beyond the range of ordinary vision.

Calvin's family-symbol was a hand presenting to God the sac of a bleeding heart, and his appropriate motto, "Shall a dog bark when his master is attacked, and shall I be silent when God's truth is impugned?"

The young evangelist did not remain long in Strassburg. He would gladly have lingered with Bucer, whom he loved, but he could not find, even there, the quiet and opportunities for study he desired, and he determined to seek a residence in Basle. In his journey southward he met at Friburg the far-famed Erasmus, a man who, had he possessed the moral courage of either Luther or Calvin, might have been the leader in the great Reformation, of which, it was said, "he laid the egg." The young Frenchman had greatly desired an interview with Erasmus, and, hoping to learn something from the great scholar and profound thinker, he interrogated him as to his opinion on some of the questions which were agitating the Church. Erasmus was cautious in his answers, and was startled by the radical sentiments of the young man. He predicted trouble as

the result of Calvin's extravagances, as he regarded them, and a manifest disposition at any and all hazards not only to stand by the principles of the Reformation as announced by Luther, but to go beyond, demanding an entire separation from a Church which he claimed was a putrid corpse ready for its burial. The old man felt relieved when the audacious youth departed. As for himself, his race was wellnigh run. He would end his days in peace, and leave the conflict for those of stronger convictions and greater daring.

Having arrived in Basle, the two travelers found for a time the seclusion they desired. In a dimly-lighted chamber, away from the noisy thoroughfares of the city, to which there came from time to time reports of the massacre of holy men in his beloved Paris, Calvin prepared a work which has ever since been recognized as the greatest theological production of the Reformation or any subsequent age. This young man, perhaps only twenty-six years of age, stands before the Christian world the peer of Augustine and a greater than Tertullian, holding up *The Institutes* as his exposition and defence of that truth for which men were ready to die in dungeons or burn at the stake. While writing this master-work he spent whole nights without sleep and entire days without food. The dedication of this work to Francis I., king of France, was itself sufficient to make its author illustrious.

The greatest thinkers who have studied *The Institutes* have expressed their admiration of "the amazing acuteness and grasp of the author's mind, the classic vigor and elegance of his style, the learning with which his views are supported, the thorough understanding of the

Christian system which it displays, and the high degree of holiness manifestly attained by the author." This production at once broke for thousands the fetters that bound them to Rome. It was a sun lifted far above the Jura Mountains, near which it was born, shining on lands far remote, revealing the way to God. It is found to-day in all the great libraries of the world, in the studies of Christian pastors in all Christendom, and, as a great teacher at Edinburgh well remarked, "*Calvin's Institutes* form a standard on which men still fall back whenever an earnest belief and an intelligent Christianity sway the heart and life."

Space will not permit an extended syllabus of this great work. We believe its statements to be in harmony with the word of God. His familiarity with the original language of the New Testament, his clear discernment and far-reaching logic by which he was enabled to see what was hidden from common minds and to set in order the various parts of the Christian system, and that indomitable perseverance which carried him through protracted investigations of truth, together with his earnest piety, which led him in the spirit of childlike docility and profound reverence to the feet of the great Teacher, —all these qualifications eminently fitted Calvin for bringing the truth to light and formulating the faith of the Reformed Church.

Martin Luther held, in the main, the same theological views taught by Calvin. These two Reformers differed chiefly with regard to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It is not generally understood that they were in so full accord. Lutheranism set forth by Luther was Calvinism. Justification by faith was made by both

the corner-stone of the Christian system, "the doctrine of a falling or rising Church."

Calvinism taught, and still maintains, that man was created holy and happy, yet mutable. God gave him the power to obey, then left him to the freedom of his own will. Obedience through a brief term of probation would have secured to himself and all his posterity establishment in holiness and everlasting life. Man fell from the estate wherein he was created by sinning against God, and, being the representative of all who were to descend from him by ordinary generation, all mankind sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression. Referring to this, Calvin thus addressed the self-righteous sinner: "Come down, now, and consider thyself. Learn and know this sin derived from Adam and dwelling in us like a glowing furnace perpetually throwing out flames and sparks, and the fire of which not only burns the senses, but pollutes all that is most noble in our souls." The Reformer held to the doctrine of total depravity, or the entire deprivation of that principle of holiness with which man had been originally endowed. Self-recovery, he maintained, was impossible. Man could destroy, but he could not re-create, himself. He could depart from God, but could not, by his own act, return to him. "If thou pretendest to rise by thine own strength, thou standest on the end of a reed." There he finds no support, and the reed is quickly broken. Salvation is in Christ only. The penalty to which we were subject has been laid on the innocent.

The divine Founder of the kingdom has suffered in the place of the children of the kingdom. Our peace



can be found only in the terrors and agony of Christ our Redeemer. Man has no sooner embraced the atonement with a faith full of confidence than he experiences peace in his conscience and a sweet and joyful communion with God. Faith in its beginning is a feeble principle. Some believe with trembling. They do not see the Sun of righteousness clearly. They only catch some beams of his glory, enough to tell that the night is past and the day is come.

— Calvin taught that the soul in Christ was for ever secure. Believing once, the Christian believed always, and Christ completed what he began. "The light of faith," he said, "is never so extinct that there does not remain some glimmer. The root of faith is never so torn from the heart that it does not remain there, although it seems to lean to this side or that."

— The Reformer exalts the office of the Holy Spirit. Conversion is his work, not our own—"A doctrine," he says, "not only useful, but sweet and savory through the fruit it bears." "Grace in all its fullness," wrote D'Aubigné, the historian of the Reformation—"grace from the first movement of regeneration until the final accomplishment of salvation—was the keynote of all Calvin's theology; and it is also the powerful artillery with which he batters the Roman fortress. Like St. Paul in the first century, like St. Augustine in the fifth, Calvin is the doctor of grace in the sixteenth."

Some alleged then, as some affirm now, that Calvinism is fatalism—that God predestines the wicked to evil, and they are unjustly condemned, since they execute only what God has determined. Calvin rejected so impious a doctrine. "Far from having obeyed God's com-

mand, the wicked by their lusts rebel against it as far as in them lies. There must be no fencing with God; there must be no saying with Agamemnon in Homer, speaking of evil, 'It is not I who am the cause, but Jupiter and Fate.' God predestinates no one to destruction; he shuts no one out of heaven by an absolute and arbitrary decree."

With faith the Reformer associated holiness. The love of sin is cast out. The will is in harmony with God's. It chooses what he chooses; it rejects what he rejects; the love of righteousness takes the place of the love of sin, and the word of God is made the rule of life. He speaks in strong terms of reprobation of a dead theology. He says: "We know those babblers who are content with having the gospel on their lips, whilst it ought to sink to the bottom of the soul, and we detest their babbling. No one can embrace the grace of the gospel but he must depart from the errors of his former life. The soul that is united to Christ enjoys a twofold benefit—the perfect imputation of Christ's righteousness which attends him to the grave, and the commencement of sanctification, which the Holy Ghost, through the truth and ordinances of religion, continually advances, till at length salvation is completed with the resurrection of the body, and the stupendous mercy of God is made the subject of everlasting praise in the kingdom which endureth for ever."

The work of Calvin is accepted, in the main, as a scriptural exposition of faith by all evangelical Christians, whilst by the larger part of Christendom it is received with scarce a modification.

The departure of the Romish Church from the apos-

tolie faith thus revived by the Reformer may be inferred from the fact that the book was condemned by the Parliament of Paris to be burned as containing damnable, pernicious, heretical doctrine, and was everywhere, among the papists, the butt of sarcasm, the subject of ceaseless defamation and the object of implacable hatred.

After giving his *Institutes* to the world, Calvin went to Ferrara in Italy, where it was said that "his star shone with a purer light than that of the bard of Orlando or of Godfrey." But the persecution which overcame Ariosto and Tasso compelled him to fly to the shores of the Rhine. On the way he stopped at Aosta in Northern Italy, a city at the base of the Alps, having above it, among the eternal glaciers, the Hospice of St. Bernard. Here, in the city where popery preserves among her most sacred relics the jawbone of John the Baptist, the evangelist did good service for the Master. Near by the ancient walls which the emperor Augustus erected is a monument which records the visit of the Reformer three centuries ago. From Aosta he passed through Switzerland; tarried a while in Noyon in the home of his childhood and among the graves of his dead; went to Paris, where his friends received him with joy, regarding him, though so young, as the most noted author and most potential man of that age; and then he departed for his adopted country beyond the limits of his loved but persecuting France.

One evening in the midsummer a diligence came into Geneva from the west and passed quietly on to an inn. It may have attracted little attention except from those who were exiles from France for conscience' sake, and who may have thought to receive through the trav-

elers some tidings from their native country. Two young men and a beautiful young woman, bearing to each other a family resemblance, entered the inn. One of them was a pale, thin man of low stature and modest bearing, and yet there was that in his remarkable face which attracted attention, and the curious about the doors or the loungers in the inn knew that no ordinary character had entered Geneva. But they knew not who he was nor whence he came. He announced his purpose to remain a single night and then continue his journey to the northward. Presently a third young man entered, the ex-canon of the cathedral of Angoulême, Du Fillet, whose name has grown familiar to us, and, glancing rapidly around the apartment, he recognized his friend John Calvin. The meeting was as joyful as it was unexpected.

After Du Fillet came a man twenty years the senior of Calvin. He is a Frenchman also and a man of might. His face is careworn and his manner uneasy. He has been in many a hard-fought battle with the papacy, but is determined to stand by his colors and fight on to the end, be it victory or defeat. He has undertaken a great work in Geneva, his residence for over two years, and he feels the need of help. He meets Calvin, of whom he has heard. He is not disappointed in the young man, though he may have thought his fame an exaggeration. So far from that, he is deeply impressed with the mighty intellect and the moral courage of his countryman who has already done so much for the Reformation. He sees before him the helper for whom he has waited and prayed, and demands of Calvin that he abandon all thoughts of Basle or

Strassburg, and at once identify himself with the work in Geneva, where his presence is greatly needed. There are in the man an imperativeness and an awful earnestness that impress Calvin. He hears the voice of God in that little inn, and feels a hand reaching down from heaven holding him to the spot. William Farel has gained his point; Calvin's plans are changed. He had expected to resume his journey in the morning, and perhaps never return. He is to abide in Geneva, and accomplish a work which shall be the joy of multitudes and the admiration of ages.

Soon after he had established his home in Geneva the young Reformer, who had spoken to little groups of Christians in the castles and villas of France, appeared in the cathedral as an expounder of the word of God to large and continually increasing assemblies. The modesty of the young man gave a peculiar charm to his teachings. He was great without knowing it. He was surrounded with an aureole of light, but did not realize his power as a teacher or compass the scope of his influence.

Here in Geneva, a city of no great pretensions, scarcely to be mentioned in connection with Paris or Rome, yet situated on one of the highways of Europe, communicating readily with Germany, France and Italy, and influencing all, Calvin preached a pure gospel, and with a distinctness and force of statement that had been long unknown. From this focal point the truth radiated into three adjoining kingdoms, so that Geneva became to Europe what Jerusalem was to Judea, a centre of religious influence whose circumference was far out of sight.

The preacher attacked the superstitions of Rome with a heroism which was sublime. Penance, indulgences, image-worship, the mass, the ignorance, cupidity, and dissoluteness of the priests, and the blasphemous assumptions of the pope, were condemned in terms intelligible to all.

Notice how in a few sentences he effectually demolishes the dogma of transubstantiation: "According to Rome, we eat in the Supper either the mortal body of Christ or his glorified body; if his mortal body, then Jesus is at this hour mortal and passable, while the Scriptures declare that he has laid aside all infirmity. If it be his immortal and glorified body, Jesus at the first Supper was seated at the table in his mortal and passable body, and he was at the same time in the hands and mouths of his disciples in his immortal and glorified body. The dreams of Marcion were never so fantastic." He then maintained that Christ makes us truly participants of his body and blood, but altogether in a spiritual way, by the power of his Holy Spirit.

He advocated the frequent observance of the Lord's Supper, since in it we are made partakers of all the benefits of Jesus Christ and furnished with an incentive to brotherly love. He deemed it desirable to celebrate the Supper on every Lord's Day, but inasmuch as this frequency might, through the infirmity of men, bring the ordinance into contempt, he judged a monthly observance of the sacrament to be all that was advisable. The council of Geneva recommended the celebration of the Supper only four times a year.

Calvin insisted upon spiritual worship as distinguished from papal ritualism, and he removed from the



churches whatever fostered idolatry or disparaged the sacrifice of Christ. He eschewed the mere æsthetic and artistic elements on which the Church of Rome relied, and he also carried into the pulpit a simplicity of style and manner which separated him from conspicuous contemporaries who were more rhetorical and declamatory. He condemned festivals and holidays, and regarded with an especial aversion that exaltation of saints and of the Virgin Mary which obscured the only Mediator between God and man.

He approved of a modified and guarded subordination of the Church to the State, and yet, whilst he distinguished the functions of the clergy from those of civil magistrates, he favored undue interference of the State with purely ecclesiastical matters. He also made the ministry dependent upon the State for their worldly maintenance, thinking by this means to escape that spiritual domination which the hierarchy sought to continue.

The friends of the Reformation in Geneva were in the minority. Contentions between the opposing parties ran high. The lines of separation were unyielding. Calvin was ready to suffer, but he would not compromise the truth. He was intelligently and conscientiously pledged to the principles of scriptural reform. On them he stood; he could do nothing else. Men knew where to find him. The floods might roll over him and for a time hide him from view, but, when overpast, he was seen standing on the very spot where they smote him. Had he been as vacillating as Erasmus, he would have been the contempt of papists and Protestants alike—a mere cipher in the history of that age, and his name, if



continued at all, would have been the synonym of moral weakness.

At length the violence of popery prevailed over the counsels of the Reformers. The religion of the latter was hated because it rebuked all manner of vice by its purity and restrained it by its stern condemnation. Calvin and Farel were driven from the city, and all who had been leaders in the Reformation were banished. Calvin left Geneva in sorrow—sorrow not so much for himself as for the people who had cast him out. Like his Master, he had done many good works among them. He had striven to lead them into the light and liberty of the gospel, and for this they sent him into exile and rejected the truth which alone was sufficient to enlighten and save them.

With a heavy heart, yet confiding in God, he went to Basle, and thence to Strassburg, where a warm welcome awaited him and a great calm. Here were some of the most noted men of the age, such as Capito, Bacon and Niger. "What gratitude we owe you," they wrote to Farel, "for resigning Calvin to us!" At once the young doctor is set in the front. He is made lecturer on theology, and students from France and Germany sit at his feet. He founded a church. He preached four times a week; he met the officers of the church once a week for the study of the Scriptures and prayer. The Lord's Supper was celebrated once a month. He revised his great work *The Institutes*, enlarged the catechism he had written at Geneva, and composed a treatise on the Lord's Supper, a copy of which he sent to Luther; and in great poverty, unwilling to receive any remuneration for his publications, he continued his multifarious labors

without intermission. He also found time to send an occasional message to the faithful few in Geneva, exhorting them to stand fast in the truth and assuring them of his affectionate remembrance of them. The tidings that were returned to him were sad. The enemies of evangelical religion cruelly persecuted its adherents, and it seemed that all the Reformation had gained was about to be irretrievably lost. Even in Strassburg there was much to grieve him. Many were disposed to remain in the Romish Church. They thought to sweep the house and garnish it. Calvin held that separation was a necessity—without it no triumph for the truth. He would not consent to live among the tombs and in an atmosphere which could only perpetuate the reign of death. He would go out of the Church and seek the heights where the air was pure and the light undimmed. He would go thither, though an exile from those he loved. He would stand alone, and, if needs be, all the world against him, he would die alone, contending to the last for Christ and his known truth. Melancthon and Bucer thought him strangely rash; they would moderate his zeal. He could tolerate no compromise with error. Many thought him stubborn, severe, radical. Perhaps there was some ground for the opinion. “Nevertheless,” as Froude said at St. Andrews, “for hard times hard men are needed, and intellects which can pierce to the roots where truth and lies part company.”

About this time Calvin married a widow, a woman of exceptional intelligence and moral worth, Idilette de Bures, with whom he lived happily for nine years, her early death casting a shadow on his life which was never wholly lifted. He lived thereafter alone—not morose,

but resigned, forgetting himself in devotion to the Church he ardently loved. He welcomed a few friends to his retired lodgings, and held cheerful converse with them. Although sedate and dignified, he was approachable by the humblest. He was not distinguished for wit, and as a postprandial speaker, after the manner of modern times, would have been considered a failure ; yet he excelled as a conversationalist and attracted the great men of his day, who acknowledged his intellectual superiority and lit their torches at the fire he had kindled.

Two years and a half of exile, filled with labors, soon rolled by. The condition of Geneva became deplorable. The foundations of law and order seemed destroyed. Murders had made the streets to run with blood. The violence of popery had produced a reaction. Many longed for Calvin's return. They asked for it. Messages were sent to him beseeching him to come to their help. The senators of Basle, Berne and Zurich united in the request. The council of Geneva did the same. Calvin hesitated, but at length the path of duty became so clear that he could no longer refuse.

With many tears, led by the cloudy pillar, he left Strassburg, returned to Geneva, and was received by the people with demonstrations of great joy. The preacher became a legislator and drew up a code of laws for the government of the little republic. These were adopted by the state. They contemplated the extirpation of every vice and of all heresy—of everything in social and public life that would tend to the fostering of impurity or weaken abhorrence of sin. They proscribed extravagance in dress, luxurious living, demoralizing amusements, games of chance and

everything in private life inconsistent with the word of God.

Calvin insisted that the Bible was the only infallible rule of faith and conduct. Men should have and express no opinion contrary to it, nor in any of the relations of life contravene its teachings. He would recognize no legislation which was not in harmony with it. He would consent to no standard of morals in the state that fell a hair's breadth below that of the divine. Had Calvin's code prevailed, Geneva would have been a marvel in the social life of all the ages—a republic which lives nowhere this side of the millennium.

The history of all nations has made it evident that mere legislation will not make men pure. A true morality finds its root in religion alone. The heart must be renewed before the life can be right. Calvin did not accomplish all that he proposed. The laws of Geneva were violated, but they stood nevertheless. If they failed to destroy, they at least served to restrain.

John Knox visited Geneva, and that little city beside the lake was to him as the porch of heaven. "Elsewhere," said he, "the word of God is taught as purely, but never anywhere have I seen God obeyed as faithfully." Doubtless there was an outward obedience in Geneva surpassing what was known in Scotland, and even this may have prepared the way in many instances for inward grace. The order, quiet and prosperity of the republic under the Reformer were such as to command the admiration of Montesquieu, who said, "The Genevese may bless the day that Calvin was born."

The spiritual head of the Church and State alike,

Calvin's labors for twenty-three years were wellnigh incredible. He preached almost daily; he wrote commentaries; he published theological and polemical pamphlets and books; he founded an academy which numbered five hundred students the first year of its existence, and has continued to this day; he attended the meetings of the church courts and of the civil councils; gave his advice as to the government of the republic; carried on an extensive correspondence with all parts of Europe; received to his house and academy, as disciples, learned men from nearly all parts of the Continent and British Isles; conferred with Reformers who were twice his own age in reference to the great questions of the day; whilst from Italy, France and Spain there came families of noble birth and exiles for conscience' sake, drawn thither by his fame, which was like that which brought the queen of Sheba to Jerusalem.

Theodore Beza was long an intimate friend of the Reformer, and we cannot do better than quote so reliable an authority concerning Calvin's habits of study and life. Beza says of him: "In living he was so temperate as to be equally remote from meanness and any degree of luxury; so sparing in food that for many years he took but one meal a day, and sleeping scarcely any; of incredible memory, so that he instantly recognized those whom he had seen but once many years before, and so that he could, after an interruption of hours, return to what he had dictated and take up the words where he had left off, and never, though oppressed by diversified and endless cares, forgetting any of those things which it was his duty to remember; of judgment so clear and exact, whatever the topic on which he

was consulted, that he often seemed to be almost prophetic. He never seemed to be at a loss for something weighty, apposite or forceful ; nor did his oral discourse much vary from his writing. In the doctrine which he delivered at first he remained firm to the last, and changed nothing ; which has happened to few theologians of our day.

“As to his manner of life, though nature formed him to be grave, there was no man who had more sweetness in common intercourse. In natural temperament he was undoubtedly choleric, but the Spirit of God had taught him to so moderate anger that he never uttered a single word unworthy of a good man, still less offended in act ; nor was he ever hasty except when the cause of religion was at stake or when he had to deal with men of violent character.”

A great deal has been said and written concerning the burning of Servetus. Calvin has been held responsible for the Spaniard's death. When Romanism has failed to make successful assaults upon Protestantism from all other quarters, it repeats the old charge, and, lifting her hands all covered with the blood of martyrs, points to the stake where Servetus burns, and says, “Your wicked Calvin did it.” Infidelity does the same. It is the only argument against Christianity which many of its enemies employ. Shutting their eyes against the light, their ears against the truth, they cry, “The founder of your faith burned Servetus.” A word just here. The Founder of our faith is Christ. The expounders of it were evangelists and apostles ; its depository is the word of God. We do not call Calvin or Augustine or Paul master. We follow them as followers of Christ. We are bound



to no statement of the Genevan Reformer unless it be fortified by a "Thus saith the Lord."

As the expounder of Pauline theology and the formulator of the evangelical faith we regard Calvin as the greatest teacher of the Reformation. In this respect he towers above Luther, Melanchthon and Zwingli. He was the heaven-appointed Joshua to lead the Church into the promised land. As such we honor him and love him.

Recognizing him as the formulator of the Reformed faith, which we believe to be scriptural, we would mitigate, whilst we do not wholly deny, the allegation which lays the death of Servetus at his door. It should be borne in mind that the sentiment of the age favored the destruction of heretics, and Calvin had not risen above it. Melanchthon, Farel, Bucer and Beza were in accord with it. The Church of Rome, maintaining these principles, had slain her tens of thousands. Heresy was pursued with swords and fagots and girdled with flames. It had driven the Vaudois Christians to the shelter of the rocks and the refuge of caves. It had strangled Christians with ropes, drowned them in rivers, burned them at stakes. Is it any wonder that the Reformed Church, not fully emancipated from the errors of the times, should deal somewhat severely with the enemies of the truth? Is it surprising that the coming of Servetus to Geneva when the Reformation was holding quietly on its way, when the principles of peace and purity were gaining the ascendancy, when Christ was being honored, trusted and adored, and heaven was opening wide its portals over the mountain-girt asylum of refugees from almost every land, should arouse Cal-



vin to bold resistance of the heretical teaching of the Spaniard? Would he not have been recreant to his trust as a spiritual shepherd if he had not given the alarm and condemned the wrong? Servetus opposed the foundation principles of the Reformation. He denied and ridiculed the faith for which so many had died. His influence was evil only. His duplicity, rashness and fanaticism were displayed on many occasions. At Vienna he had been proved guilty of perjury. Intellectually strong, he was morally weak. He came to Geneva with malicious intent. He died with blasphemies on his lips.

Calvin was especially influenced by the teachings of Pierre de l'Étoile, the great French jurist, a Romanist, whose pupil he had been. Pierre had taught that the prosperity of nations depends upon obedience to the laws, and insisted that if they punish outrages against the rights of man, much more ought they to punish outrages against the rights of God. "What?" exclaimed the great jurist, "shall the law protect a man in his body and goods, and not in his soul and his most precious and eternal inheritance?" "A thief shall not be able to rob us of our purses, but a heretic may deprive us of heaven. Those insensate and furious men who proclaim heretical and infamous opinions ought first to be delivered up to divine vengeance, and afterward visited with corporal punishment." These principles were modified by the Reformation, but not entirely discarded.

Calvin felt that the souls of many were endangered by Servetus's teachings. The interests at stake were to a single life as Mont Blanc to the anthill at its base.

Believing this, he had deprecated the Spaniard's coming, and resisted him when he came. He formulated charges against him, and believed he ought to be punished. He was influenced by a mistaken sense of duty to God, to the Church and to a perishing world. Still, it was the State rather than Calvin that demanded the death of Servetus, and it was urged by considerations for the safety of the Republic rather than for the interests of the Church. And after the government of Geneva had condemned Servetus to be burned, Calvin asked for a modification of the sentence. This was denied on the ground that the law prescribed the punishment and there remained no room for choice. Servetus had denounced Calvin as a homicide, and had his counsel prevailed the Reformer would have been burned. The Spaniard digged a pit and fell into it himself. We regret the manner of his death. The Protestant Church discourages the employment of carnal weapons and forbids corporal punishment. But it holds the Romish Church, rather than the Reformer, responsible for the death of Servetus—the age rather than Calvin.

But is it not surprising that the burning of Servetus should so stand out in history and be so persistently misrepresented by Romanists and infidels that all the scenes of bloodshed in Paris and Rome and in the valleys of Piedmont and on the British Isles—blood flowing in rivers, the flames of funeral-piles turning night into day and sending their glare across the continent,—that all these should be almost or quite forgotten, and the death of a lone man should shut out of view the hecatombs of martyrs for the Protestant faith.? It declares the weakness of our enemies. It honors the Protestant

faith. It declares the freedom of the Reformation from the atrocities of popery. The spot it denounces is on the sun, and that rides in glory through the sky.

Calvin's name is one of the most honorable in all the annals of the Christian era, and his influence has extended from Geneva to the ends of the earth. The system of faith formulated from the word of God has lived without material change for three hundred years, and is the faith of the largest part of Christendom to-day.

We have only gathered up some shreds of the wonderful story. We have spent only a few moments where were enacted the scenes of a marvelous life.

On all the continent of Europe there is to many no city more interesting than Geneva. St. Peter's cathedral has long been a Protestant church. It stands on the summit of a hill in the ancient town. It is an imposing temple, with nave and transept and high arches upborne by massive columns, to one of which is attached the pulpit the Reformer occupied three centuries ago. From the porch of St. Peter's we may look out on one of the most inspiring prospects the world affords. Near by is the beautiful Lake Lemán, its waters clear as crystal, the Jura Mountains casting their shadows over it. The vine-covered Savoy hills form its southern boundary. The Plain Palais lies in strange beauty at our feet. Walnut-groves and orchards and fields of corn reach down to the waters of the Arve and stretch away to the distant hills, and beyond the Grand Salève are the Alpine peaks covered with perpetual snows, whilst far above the Mer de Glace rises Mont Blanc, wearing a gleaming crown and looking down upon us as out of another world.

Amid scenes of such beauty and grandeur Calvin preached the everlasting gospel; and if ever he found time to look on the great mountains or that near lake, they may have suggested thoughts of God's power, of the eternity of truth and of the saints' everlasting rest in that quiet haven, guarded by the mountain of spices, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.

In this cathedral Calvin delivered his last sermon, Feb. 6, 1564; and although, when unable to walk, he was carried thither by his friends, yet he could do no more than utter a few sentences after another had preached. He suffered from severe pain, and an asthmatic trouble which had long harassed him made even ordinary conversation difficult. As the sun of life sank toward its setting his Christian character shone with peculiar beauty. His heart was softened and enlarged. He had been often defamed, even by friends of the Reformation, but he freely forgave, and repeated his oft-expressed desire for closer union among the various branches of the Reformed Church. He longed to see them closing up their ranks and presenting an undivided front to the enemy. Rome boasted of her unity. Why should not the Protestant Church be one? Was there not common ground broad enough on which the churches of Germany, Italy and France might stand? Could not Luther, Zwingli and Calvin maintain the same essential system in opposition to the errors of Rome? No one in the sixteenth century prayed and labored so earnestly as he for the union of the Reformed churches. He wrote books and pamphlets and many letters urging this upon all the friends of evangelical religion. He

was as far removed from bigotry as man could be. Narrow-mindedness and short-sightedness enclosed with limited walls, but his vision was wide and far-reaching, and his heart embraced all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ. To the interests of church unity the last hours of his life were devoted.

A few weeks before his death he was carried to the council-house, and there nominated a new rector for the Gymnasium, to whom the usual oath was administered. Then rising from his seat with uncovered head, laboring for breath, he thanked the lords for all their expressions of sympathy with him and their acts of kindness in his affliction, intimating that he looked on them for the last time. The noble lords bowed their heads and shed tears. His last farewell was spoken, and he passed out of the assembly-room never to return. The following Sabbath he was carried to the cathedral in a chair, received the Lord's Supper, joined in the closing hymn, and then was borne to his own house to die.

A little later he wrote to Farel, not expecting to meet him again. There is a marked tenderness breathing through this message to his old and tried friend: "Fare thee well, best and frankest brother, and since it is God's will that thou shouldst outlive me, live mindful of our inward attachment, which will both be useful to the Church and bring us abiding fruit in heaven. I would not that thou shouldst weary thyself for me. My breath is weak, and I hourly look for it to leave me altogether. It is enough that I live and die in Christ, who is gain to his people both in life and death. Yet once more, farewell to thee and the brethren."

A few days pass by, and we see a man twenty years

the senior of Calvin entering the chamber of the Reformer. His hair is white as the snows of the mountain. His silvery beard is long and flowing. His bearing is majestic; his eyes are undimmed by years, and whilst his face indicates a man born for strife, it yet wears a benignant expression, and there is somewhat of pensiveness in the tones of his voice as he addresses with strong affection his dying countryman. It is William Farel, now of Neufchâtel, the brother beloved to whom Calvin had written but a little while before—the man who had introduced him to Geneva twenty-three years ago.

Very touching is their interview. Their souls are knit together with bands of iron. They embrace each other for the last time, look at each other through their tears, and separate to meet no more on earth.

Calvin's sufferings increased, but he bore them patiently. "Thou crushest me, O Lord! but it is enough for me that it is thy hand." To the sorrowing friends who gathered about him he calmly spoke of his departure, and then, fixing on them those remarkable eyes which never lost their brilliancy, he uttered eloquent and holy words concerning his Christ and theirs and the glorious rest to which he was going.

He directed that his worn body should be buried in the cemetery of Plain Palais, and that no monument should be erected over his grave, the place of his sepulchre to be unknown.

Just as the sun went down behind the snow-capped Alps, a subdued light on the plain and deepening shadows creeping over the peaceful lake, he closed his eyes and fell asleep in Jesus.

"Thus," said Theodore Beza, who had watched be-



side his bed and with the affectionateness of a son smoothed his dying pillow,—“Thus God withdrew into heaven that most brilliant light which was a lamp of the Church. In the following night and day there was immense grief and lamentation in the whole city; for the republic had lost its wisest citizen, the Church its faithful shepherd, the Academy an incomparable teacher, the Reformation its main support, and all their best earthly comforter and friend.”

On the afternoon of the Sabbath the remains were placed in a simple coffin, and on the following day all that was left of John Calvin was laid in the grave. The records of the cemetery mention the day and indicate somewhat indefinitely the place of his burial. In the shade of trees is a small stone rising a few inches above the surface of the ground, with these initials only: “J. C.” If not just there, yet somewhere near, lies the dust of the great Reformer awaiting the long-promised day. His monument is broad as the earth, high as heaven and enduring as eternity.

Beza has said of Calvin's life “that it was a beautiful example of piety easy to calumniate, but difficult to imitate.” Bullinger declared, “There is no man of whom it has been said with equal justice, in the words of an apostle, ‘he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible.’” Even Arminius pronounced him “an incomparable interpreter of Scripture,” and Ernest Renan, an enemy, says of him, “He was the most Christian man of his generation.”

Thus friends and foes bow to the majesty of his name. He was wont to dwell by faith in God above the storm and the cloud, reverential, trustful and unharmed; grow-



ing in greatness by reason of his association with Him who alone is infinite; and, having achieved one of the greatest works ever wrought by man since the first apostles laid the foundations of the Christian Church, he went to his glorious reward, where for three centuries—which seem to him as one day, so swiftly pass the ages of that endless life—he has verified the truth as it is in Christ, and welcomed to that heavenly joy a great multitude who, under God, owe their salvation to the converted priest of Noyon, concerning whom Pius IV., hearing of his death, said, “If I had such servants my dominions would extend from sea to sea.”



CRANMER: THE ENGLISH REFORMATION.

*“ Fear not, little flock ; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”*

LUKE 12: 32.

*“ The Church, as Jerome saith of Arcturus, is much tossed, but never drowned. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved : God shall help her and that right early.”*

SWINNOCK.

*“ The visible Church hath the privilege of being under God’s special care and government ; of being protected and preserved in all ages, notwithstanding the opposition of all enemies.”*

LARGER CATECHISM, Ans. to Question 63.

## CRANMER: THE ENGLISH REFORMATION.

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IN the revival of apostolic religion in England we find no central figure. No one man rises far above the common level, as did Luther in Germany, Calvin in Switzerland and Knox in Scotland—a man of great intellect, powerful will and unfaltering courage, calculated to mould the sentiments of a nation, to utilize the power of thrones and to lead on an invincible host from conquest to greater victory.

God accomplished his purposes concerning England through a variety of agencies. He made the passions of wicked men to serve him, and the ambitions of the worldly great to aid the triumphs of truth. On the stage where was enacted the great drama of Reform we see humble priests, mitred bishops and crowned heads, with here and there a figure more commanding than the rest giving direction to the plot and intelligently or unwittingly conducting it to an issue which brought glory to God and good to men.

But the agent gives character to his work. The Reformation in England was not so radical and beneficent as the Reformation in Scotland, and the distinction remains until this day. Scotland hated the very appearance of superstition, and sundered every tie that bound her to Rome. England suffered some of the errors of the papacy to linger in her creed, and not a

little of sensuousness in worship to mar the beauty of her ritual. The chair of St. Peter had one foot on the British Isles and threw its shadow over the land of holy martyrs.

But there soon appeared two distinct elements in the English Reformation, the hierarchical and the evangelical. The first made much of the Church, apostolic succession and the sacraments; the other exalted Christ, a spiritual worship and the communion of saints. The latter has preserved the truth to England, and so prevented what would otherwise have been an inevitable and early result—relapse to popery, the second condition worse than the first.

In the Protestant city of Basle, as the weeks and months advance, there sits among his books a student who is a contemporary of Luther. The morning sun, which sets a gleaming crown on the snow-capped Matterhorn ere it lights the valley and spreads its silvery sheen on the Rhine, wakes the student to his loved employ, and when the lights of the city are wellnigh all extinguished he is toiling on.

He was one of the ripest scholars of his age, and, though timid and compromising, better fitted for the cloister than for the open field of battle, yet he performed an important part, and his restoration of the New Testament to its purity in the original Greek, with its Latin version annexed, was a long step in the direction of Reform.

It is Erasmus of whom we again speak. His New Testament found its way to the universities of England, and in these centres of influence, where each scholar represented a thousand, it led many into the light.

Because of this the Roman pontiff was alarmed, bishops and priests denounced the heretic, monasteries were all aflame with holy wrath. The Bible is slipping from the hands of the priests, and soon, translated it may be into the language of the common people, it will dig the grave of the papacy. Romanists fancy they see winged armies in the sky mustering for battle. The earth, once so firm under their tread, grows uneasy and yielding as the waves of the sea. Popery dreads the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, for that will hew down the trees of error which have shut out the light, and open a highway over which exiled captives may return to God.

The Greek and Latin Testament was the subject of much comment among the learned. In the universities of Cambridge and Oxford it was diligently searched by students and their instructors. As young men walked arm in arm along the galleries, in the shaded campus or across the contiguous meadows they talked together of the words and works of Jesus. One of these young men was destined to exert a far-reaching influence in the interests of the Reformation.

He was a pale, thoughtful youth. For months there seemed some shadow on his spirit which deepened as the weeks went on. He had been to the confessional and had told the listening priest his sad story of sins and forebodings. He had gone through the prescribed ritual of the Church and had performed all its penances. But no relief had come. He heard of the Greek Testament of Erasmus. He opened it; then shut it with trembling. Was it not a proscribed book? Did not his confessor say that the Greek language was the dialect



of the lost? But may not the priest be an intentional deceiver?

The wicked imputation increased his self-condemnation. Still, he would know whereof this forbidden volume speaks. There is a crushing load of guilt on his soul as he opens the book and reads: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." He clasped his hands over the text and exclaimed, "What! St. Paul the chief of sinners! and yet St. Paul is sure of being saved." He looked again at the strange words. Has he read aright? Even so. "O assertion of St. Paul, how sweet art thou to my soul!" exclaimed the pale student as the soft light of heaven rested on the book and on his careworn face. He goes away with a new hope in his heart and a new song in his mouth, saying, "Jesus Christ saves; yes, Jesus Christ saves." The young man was Thomas Bilney, of whom we shall hear more hereafter.

There was another student, whose name is suggested by that of Bilney. He was the son of a Leicester yeoman, a young man of great promise, who soon pushed his way to the front in the contest for collegiate distinction, and was at the same time a devout papist—Hugh Latimer. Having completed his classical course, he devoted himself to theological study. Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus were his favorite authors. But his attainments in divinity were not such as might have been expected. The superstitious practices of religion engaged his attention and the divine oracles were neglected. An abject slave, he bowed the knee to Rome and hated the very semblance of evangelical religion.

His oration on the occasion of his receiving his degree of bachelor of divinity was a bold assault on Melancthon and the principles of the Reformation. The papists were elated at his eloquent philippic and thought they saw in him a brave defender of their faith.

That day there sat in the audience a convert to Protestantism rejoicing in the new-found Christ, who regarded the ambitious orator with an absorbing interest. He believed the grace of God would yet make the young man a noble champion for the truth, building up what he now attempts to tear down. The auditor is Bilney. He sought Latimer in the retirement of his study and besought him to hear his confession. It was not what the confessor expected. Bilney gives an account of his conversion—speaks of the guilt that oppressed him, the night of despair which darkened about him, his mis-directed efforts to obtain relief, which issued in disappointment only, and then at last his glad surprise when the saying of St. Paul opened to him the gateway to a happy life; Christ the Sin-bearer thereafter his only and sufficient Saviour. Latimer's interest deepens as the story of religious experience advances, and then, with Bilney at his feet, there rises to his view a nobler sight, even the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

At once he was overwhelmed with a sense of his great unkindness to the Saviour in having assailed him in the person of his friends. He bowed his head and wept. Bilney said, "Brother, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow." Now Latimer feels on his head the droppings of Christ's cleansing blood, and hears a voice in the silent chambers of his soul declaring

him forgiven and saved through the atonement made on Calvary. He becomes a preacher of the holy evangel, and vies with Melanchthon in exalting the Son of God. We shall hear more of Hugh Latimer by and by.

Now we turn to a third. We have said the Reformation in England had no central figure. But if by any construction such a claim can be made—and in a modified sense we may accept it—then the man upon whom this distinction rests is Thomas Cranmer, the first Protestant archbishop of England.

He was twenty years the junior of Latimer, and was born six years after Martin Luther—July 2, 1489. When fourteen years of age he was sent to Cambridge. Here, according to Strype, “he was nursed in the grossest kind of sophistry, logic, philosophy moral and natural; not in the text of the old philosophers, but chiefly in the dark riddles of Duns and other subtile questionists.”

When twenty-two years of age he turned to more profitable studies. The writings of Fabre, Erasmus and Le Févre shed a new light into his understanding. He found herein statements of truth which, though mingled with errors, were helpful to his inquiring mind, and he groped in the early dawn waiting for the full-orbed sun. “What says the word of God?” he asked. “Is not it the only and infallible source of light?” For three years he searched the Scriptures which testify of Christ. Still he saw men as trees walking, but his vision grew clearer as his studies advanced. He was a slow learner, always cautious in receiving the opinions of others, and not always firm in maintaining his own. But this must be said of him, that he was a Biblicist rather than a

Churchman. He would not tie his faith to the *ipse dixit* of the pope nor accept as unquestionable truth whatever was taught by the theologians of Rome. He refused the position of fellow in Wolsey's college—a distinction awarded only to scholars of unusual gifts and learning.

When thirty-two years of age he received the degree of doctor of divinity, was made a professor in the university and was advanced to other positions of honor and trust.

But as yet Cranmer was not fully released from the trammels of the papacy. He stood on middle ground. He wished to know the truth. "Is it to be found," he inquired, "in Protestantism or in popery?" His faith in the latter was shaken. He was not prepared to adopt the principles of the former. So his mind remained in equilibrium. But at length, as the sequel of our story will show, he took decided ground in favor of the Reformation, became its chief support and suffered martyrdom rather than deny the faith.

Whilst Cranmer was yet connected with the University of Cambridge, Henry VIII. was questioning the lawfulness of his marriage to Catherine of Arragon, who had been the wife of his deceased brother Arthur. He may have had scruples on the subject before his marriage, and at the same time, influenced by political considerations as well as by affection for the daughter of King Ferdinand, he desired to consummate the relation. Pope Julius II. was favorably disposed, and set aside all questions of conscience and the prohibition of the canon law by a special dispensation. Henry's children by this marriage had all died with the exception of the princess Mary. No queen had ever sat on the throne

of England. Had this surviving child been a son, the king's scruples respecting his marriage might not have been revived, if indeed they had any previous existence.

There was another reason why Henry desired a divorce. He had transferred his affections from his queen to Anne Boleyn, a young maid of honor whose personal attractions had arrested his attention. But a divorce requires the pope's consent. The successor of St. Peter is an ecclesiastical ruler whose prerogatives the crowned heads of Europe have not dared to disregard. Julius II. has been succeeded by Clement VII. Will this head of the Church condemn what his predecessor approved, and grant the divorce for which this royal suppliant sues? More than that: will he venture to displease Charles V., the nephew of the queen? The time had been when kings had abjectly bowed in the presence of Roman pontiffs, but their reverence for the successor of St. Peter was beginning to decline. It is not wise to put the devotion of princes to a test too severe when this ghost of apostolic faith is haunting alike the corridors of monasteries and the ancient halls of learning. Pope Clement is perplexed. The two horns of a dilemma are thrust at him. Which shall he take? While he hesitates, Henry employs Cardinal Wolsey to represent his wishes to the pope, and Wolsey solicits the aid of Cardinal Campeggio. They urge the divorce by considerations of State and Church policy.

Wolsey was influenced in his relations to the matter by his hatred of Charles V., the nephew of Catherine, who had twice defeated his election to the pontificate. The cardinal supposed that the separation could be

readily secured, and so he would accomplish his revenge on Charles. Louis XII. had obtained a divorce from his queen, the noble Joan, simply on the ground that he did not have a proper affection for her, and it cannot be that Clement will fail to recognize the reasonableness of Wolsey's argument for dissolving the marital tie in this instance, since it was created in violation of the common law of the Church. But he failed, and in failing lost his courage and died of a broken heart. He was an unwitting instrument in bringing about the Reformation. Dead men who had sought to gratify personal ambition or revenge were the stepping-stones by which the Church ascended to the throne of spiritual power.

The question involved even more than at first appeared. Had Henry's request been granted he would doubtless have continued a devout and obedient papist and submitted to the jurisdiction of Rome. Besides, he was not in sympathy with the Reformation. For evangelical religion he had no love, and of a spiritual life he had no experience. He had secured to himself the title of "Defender of the Faith" by writing a book against Lutheranism, and Rome thought to find in him a loyal son for ever. At the same time, he is determined to gratify his passion, cost what it may. He will have his own way, and thrust even the pope from the track of his unholy purpose. He will do this, not because he loves Rome less, but Anne Boleyn more.

In view of this attitude he was summoned to appear before the pope in person or by proxy. The earl of Wiltshire, Anne Boleyn's father, was commissioned to convey to Clement, in unequivocal terms, Henry's refusal to comply with the demand, either in person or by



another. When the earl entered the audience-room of the pope, His Holiness extended to him the opportunity of kissing his foot. The gracious offer was treated with indignation, and the final breach between the Holy See and England was foreshadowed.

Clement decided to adhere to his recognition of the king's marriage to Catherine. He was quite willing to give his sanction to polygamy in a dispensation allowing Henry to take Anne Boleyn as a second wife, but he could not so stultify his conscience, forsooth! as to grant a divorce from the first. The king then determined to renounce the jurisdiction of Rome, to separate the Church of England from the Holy See and declare himself its only spiritual head. The reasons which suggested this radical course were doubtless two: one, to make Anne Boleyn his queen; and the other, to increase his own power as a ruler by destroying that of the pope.

It is in connection with this matter of Henry's relation to Catherine that Cranmer comes into prominent notice. It had been reported to the king that this doctor of Cambridge had suggested the reference of this mooted question of divorce to the universities of Europe. In Cranmer's opinion, the appeal to the pope was unnecessary—nay more, a great mistake. This judgment of Cranmer's was pleasing to the king, and he determined to act upon it. He expected thus to carry his point. On the 14th of July, 1532, at Windsor Castle, he held his last interview with Catherine of Arragon, his true and devoted wife for twenty years. On the 14th of the following November he was married to Anne Boleyn, and eleven weeks later the divorce was publicly decreed.



The indignation of the pope was without bounds. The thunders of the Vatican rolled across the Continent, but sank to feeble whispers ere they had crossed the Channel. The English Parliament declared the king and his successors the only supreme heads of the Church of England. Thus they raised the wall of separation from Rome, and papal bulls could no more batter it down than the baying of a dog could intimidate the moon. The sentiment of Henry might have been expressed in the words of the prince of English poets :

“ No Italian priest  
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions ;  
So tell the pope : all reverence set apart  
To him or his usurped authority.”

*King John*, Act III. sc. 1.

Thomas Cranmer is now archbishop of Canterbury, and occupies in Henry's esteem the place once held by Wolsey, the man who had served his king faithfully and long, his failure in the matter of the divorce the cause of his fall ; the pliant subject who had always sought to live in harmony with the royal will ; who had built a great palace, the wonder of the age, then gave it to his master, and who died at last a remorseful death, his thoughts divided between the ingratitude of Henry and the displeasure of his injured Lord, as the glory of this world faded from sight exclaiming in ever-memorable words, “ Had I but served my God as I have served my king, he would not have given me over in my gray hairs.” Unhappy Wolsey ! Many since his day, as before it, have found it a vain thing to put confidence in princes.

When Cranmer was consecrated archbishop he took

the customary oath of allegiance—first to the pope, and secondly to the king. But he placed on record a protest, which was never transmitted to the pope, in which he declared his superior devotion to the supremacy of the English sovereign. This act has been severely condemned as involving duplicity if not absolute dishonesty. Some have regarded it as simply an interpretation of the oath taken. It recognized the broader compass of regal power as extending both to the Church and the State. Henry was also a spiritual ruler. He wore the papal crown on English soil. Hence Cranmer's submission to the pope must be modified by his duty to the king. This, however, is not a satisfactory explanation. No doubt there was an element of weakness in Cranmer's course and a fear of royal displeasure. He was more anxious to conciliate Henry, who was near by, than Clement, beyond the Channel and the Alps.

But observe that at this stage the Church of England continues to maintain the old doctrinal basis. Cranmer holds to transubstantiation; so does Henry, so do the clergy at large. There is no Knox to confront ignorance and wickedness in kings' houses, to confound the enemies of the faith by resistless logic and vehement eloquence, organizing the scattered friends of the Reformation and encouraging the wavering and faint-hearted.

Thomas Cranmer is not made of such stern stuff as Latimer, and in most of the elements of a Reformer is inferior to Tyndale. He is a sincere seeker after truth, but is slow to find it, and when he has found it he hesitates to make it known to others. He is cautious to a fault, and apparently endangers the Reformation by his timidity. He waits for the people to overtake him,

then gives voice to their common convictions of truth and duty. He did not shine by reason of any moral greatness either of courage or piety, "but was well adapted to save a cause in difficult circumstances for a more favorable time." Perhaps the Reformation advanced with as much rapidity as was consistent with its ultimate triumph. Should an engine start at the highest attainable speed, it would break all the couplings and leave the train hopelessly stationary on the track. Gradual acceleration of movement would secure a more desirable result.

D'Aubigné's judgment of Cranmer is alike creditable to the historian and his subject, pronouncing him the right man for England at the time of her separation from the papacy: "Notwithstanding his compromises, he never abandoned the great principles of the Reformation; notwithstanding his concessions, he took advantage of every opportunity to encourage those who shared his faith to march toward a better future."

It cost men something in those days to be Reformers. Cranmer had witnessed martyrdoms for the gospel's sake. He had seen the pious Bilney led to the stake, and, although the martyr died with the radiance of heaven on his face and the peace of heaven in his soul, yet the archbishop shrank from such a fate; and perhaps it is well that he did not court a martyr's death.

A long step toward the Reformation of the Church was taken when, through Cranmer's influence, the Bible was translated and given to the people. Previous attempts to do this had failed. The first translation was the work of William Tyndale, assisted by Miles Cov-

erdale, afterward bishop of Exeter. Both these men were eminently zealous for the gospel of Christ. They were persuaded that the Reformation of the Church and the salvation of the world could be effected only through the word of God. For his devotion to the truth Tyndale suffered martyrdom at Vilvoorden, near Brussels.

The circulation of the English Bible had been prevented by Sir Thomas More and Bishop Tostall. Four years later it was republished, but by the direction of the bishops and clergy of England was burned. Now Cranmer makes another effort to secure its circulation. The Catholic bishops, led by the wicked Gardiner, resisted the project. They said, "The teaching of the Church is sufficient: we must prohibit Tyndale's Testament and the heretical books which come to us from beyond the sea." Ah yes; so it has ever been: popery hates the light. It would keep the people in ignorance, for so only can it keep them within the pale of a corrupt Church.

With this opposition what can be done? Cranmer is ready for compromise. If he cannot take two steps forward, he is content to take one. It is agreed that the Bible shall be printed in the language of the people, but its circulation shall be confined to the higher and educated classes. Not so did John Knox and the Scottish Parliament decide, for they gave the Bible to the peasant as well as to the master, and sent it out on its blessed mission through every city, village and hamlet from the Cheviot Hills to the stormy Minch and Pentland Frith. But Cranmer hoped for greater liberty in some better day, and rejoiced in the royal sanction given to this initial step. He said of the Bible, "It is the

balm that will heal our wounds, and will be a more precious jewel in our houses than either gold or silver." He waits the Lord's appointed day.

About this time Henry decreed the suppression of all monasteries and the transfer of their wealth to the royal coffers. The Carthusian monks had refused to recognize Henry's supremacy. They maintained that the pontiff whose throne was on the Tiber was God's representative on the earth and the spiritual head of the Church throughout the world. Thereupon Laurence, Webster and Haughton, priors respectively of Belval, Axholm and London Charter-house, were convicted of high treason. The penalty was death. They went calmly to the gallows, protesting to the last that the king was not the head of the Church of England, and declaring their unwavering devotion to the principles of the Roman Catholic faith. But one thing was settled: Henry will not share his throne and the affections of his people with the pope of Rome. The bishops of his realm must acknowledge him head of the Church as he is of the State. There were some who would not admit so arrogant a claim.

Then, too, there were those in the Romanist party who continued to condemn his marriage to Anne Boleyn. For this double offence he determined to make an example of nobler victims than had yet been offered. Hence Bishop Foster and Sir Thomas More—late chancellor of England, who had already been sent to the Tower—were executed as a "state necessity." It was a wicked and impolitic deed. It shocked the nation and was condemned by even the firmest adherents to the throne. Yet the popular indignation was somewhat modified by

the fact that Sir Thomas More had himself severely persecuted the Protestants. Noble men, whose only offence was their devotion to the holy evangel, had been burned at Smithfield, praying for their murderers with their dying breath. Now he who had defended the Latin faith by fire and sword meets a similar fate.

The friends of the Reformation were still in the minority. The suppression and spoliation of the monasteries gave offence to the Romanists. The relaxation of papal domination occasioned alarm and led to rebellion. Then the king thought best to modify his policy, and, the Romanists, being in the ascendancy, secured the adoption of the famous Six Articles. These decreed—1st. Transubstantiation, or the change of the bread and wine of the sacrament, after consecration, into the actual body and blood of Christ: this is also called the doctrine of the real presence. 2d. That the communion in both kinds—that is, in the bread and wine—is not necessary, and should not be permitted to the laity: they receive only the bread or wafer; the priest communicates in both kinds. 3d. The perpetual obligation of vows of chastity. 4th. The efficacy of private masses for the souls of the dead. 5th. The celibacy of the clergy: priests are under no circumstances permitted to marry. 6th. The value of auricular confession. Thus was popery striving for the pre-eminence. It could scarcely have asked more except a recognition of the supremacy of the pope. This of course Henry would resist to the last. At the same time it was decreed that any one who opposed the doctrine of transubstantiation should be liable to death by burning, and should forfeit all his



lands and goods. The denial of any of the other articles should be deemed felony and involve the forfeiture of all worldly substance.

These articles were opposed by Archbishop Cranmer for three consecutive days in arguments of great power, presented in terms so modest and grave as even to conciliate the king and such advocates of the act as the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk. The papists alleged that Cranmer opposed the articles because one of them required celibacy, and he was himself married. But he had other reasons and graver for his opposition, and especially did he dislike the severity of the penalty which the act prescribed. This deliverance of the Parliament brought him great sorrow, but he yielded to it. He sent his wife to Germany and went quietly on in his work.

Meanwhile, Henry wields a sword like that preserved in Dumbarton Castle—double-handed. It smites on the right hand and on the left. The papist denies the supremacy of the king; the Protestant denies transubstantiation: the Tudor's weapon destroys both. Even Cranmer is in danger, and only his conciliatory policy and past services can save him.

Here let it be observed that the Reformation in England was largely occupied with the modification of the doctrine of the real presence in the Lord's Supper. Transubstantiation, rather than justification by faith, as in Germany, engaged attention. The Reform in England was further differentiated from the Reform in Scotland by the principle which it applied to church ceremonies. The Anglican Church held that it was proper to employ in divine worship whatever was not



prohibited in the Scriptures. The Church in Scotland, as did a large part of the continental Church, insisted upon such ordinances and ceremonies only as were directly enjoined in the word of God.

In England, episcopal ordination was preferred, yet it was deemed essential by but few. Cranmer maintained the validity of the orders of the foreign Protestant non-episcopal churches. He expressed the opinion that there were not two bishops on the bench or one clergyman in fifty throughout the Anglican Church who would deny the validity of the order of those continental pastors who had not received their ordination from episcopal hands. He regarded the presbyter as the peer of the bishop in relation to the induction into holy orders. The ecclesiastics who insisted upon apostolic succession were in the minority at the first, but the sentiments they held ultimately gained the ascendancy. To this we may refer hereafter.

Here we pause a little to inquire the fate of Anne Boleyn. Respecting her character opposite opinions have been entertained. Froude in his admiration of Henry VIII. throws a shadow over the memory of the queen that he may in some measure justify the cruelty of the former. He maintains that the youthful Anne, who had spent nine years in the French court, the most profligate in Europe, had been contaminated by it. On the other hand, Merle d'Aubigné held that she was reared in the household of the pious Margaret of Angoulême, a friend of Calvin's and of the Reformation.

The splendors of the throne attracted her, and for a time, it may be, she wavered in her devotion to Christ.

Her piety was severely tested. But it reasserted itself, and by subsequent trials was purged. "She looked within herself, and found once more, as queen, that for those who have everything, as well as those who have nothing, there is only one single good—God himself." She was in sympathy with Protestantism; she favored the unlimited circulation of the Bible; she had the confidence of Tyndale and Cranmer. She was light-hearted, and in her relations to the king's courtiers was not always guarded. But she was doubtless as pure-minded as she was beautiful in person and unaffected in manner.

But the mercurial Henry, who had sent Catherine of Arragon into disgrace and to an early death, transferred his affections from his second queen to Jane Seymour, and Anne, accused of crimes of which she had never been guilty, was arrested, sent to the Tower and after a mock trial condemned to death. When she received her sentence she lifted her hands to heaven and said, "O Father! O Creator! thou who art the way, the truth and the life, thou knowest I have not deserved this fate." On the morning of the 19th of May, 1536, she was led out to the place of execution. The dukes of Suffolk and Richmond, the lord chancellor, the lord mayor and other officials were there. There too was the executioner, who had come from Calais, holding his gleaming axe as Anne, attended by four maids of honor, ascended the scaffold. A more beautiful woman lived not in the English realm, and that day her person seemed invested with unwonted charms. The mother of Elizabeth, the future queen, she was but thirty years of age, and no wonder if her young heart clung to life and to her child. Henry is gone miles away from London,

yet he has arranged for a speedy communication of her death. Anne addressed those who were to witness her execution. "I am not come here," she said, "to justify myself; I leave my justification entirely with Christ, in whom I put my trust. I will accuse no man nor speak anything of that whereof I am accused." She knelt a few moments in silent prayer, then arose, laid her head on the block, an expression of strange sweetness on her face and on her lips the prayer, "O Jesus, receive my soul." The executioner's axe swept down and her head fell. The next moment an artilleryman on the wall fired the great gun which was to carry to the king the tidings of Anne's death.

Henry was in Epping Forest with a group of hunters about him. He heard the report of the gun as it swept across the meadows and down the long aisles of the forest. "Ha! ha!" shouted the king, "the deed is done! Uncouple the hounds and away."

The murky clouds which overhung the old Tower and all London that morning were pierced by one Eye which slumbers not nor sleeps, and a record of that day's doings was made in the court which is higher than Henry's, and he must meet it when his career of crime is ended.

The day following Anne's death Henry was married to Jane Seymour, who died at the expiration of a year, having given birth to a son, afterward Edward VI. Next he married Anne of Cleves, a Protestant, from whom he was divorced after he had beheaded Thomas Cromwell, who had advised the marriage. He then married the guilty and unhappy Catherine Howard, whom he soon after beheaded. And finally he chose

for his sixth wife Catherine Parr, the virtuous widow of Lord Latimer, who survived him.

Of the latter part of Henry's life we can speak but briefly. Through the influence of Cranmer important changes were made in the canon law of the Church. Superstitions which had long been practiced were abolished, such as creeping to the cross and adoring it, the covering of images in the time of Lent and representations of the Trinity which received idolatrous worship. Other changes of a minor kind were effected, and the Church advanced toward the more scriptural worship which was at a later period to distinguish the Protestant from the papal communion.

After a most eventful career, in which lights and shadows mingled, Henry VIII. departed this life Jan. 28, 1547, in the thirty-fifth year of his reign and in the fifty-sixth year of his age. Thomas Cranmer, the archbishop and primate of England, was summoned to his bedside, but found the king speechless. Henry pressed Cranmer's hand in token of his faith in God through Jesus Christ. A theoretical faith we doubt not he had, but, so far as the world knows, he had nothing more. Possibly he applied to Christ at the last for a kingly pardon, and found there was rain enough in the sweet heavens to make even a hand as bloody as his white as snow. We cannot tell. There is a day coming which shall declare his doom.

It is not a part of our purpose to discuss the character of Henry. One has said that but for his matrimonial scandals he would have been respected, if not beloved. His reign, on the whole, was a prosperous one and comparatively peaceful. Though in sympathies and

faith a Romanist, yet he was for that age a tolerant ruler, and in his day were laid the foundations of that Protestantism which afterward became the glory and defence of England.

Froude is lavish in his praise of Henry, although he seems to distinguish between the earlier and latter parts of his reign. He thinks that if the king had died at the moment when the divorce from Catherine of Arragon was first agitated, his loss would have been deplored as one of the heaviest misfortunes which had befallen the country, and he would have left a name which would have taken its place in history by the side of that of the Black Prince or of the conqueror of Agincourt.

On the other hand, Hume in his terse style, whilst recognizing Henry's excellences, does not hesitate to say that "a catalogue of his vices would comprehend many of the worst qualities incident to human nature—violence, cruelty, profusion, rapacity, injustice, bigotry, presumption, caprice;" and yet "this prince not only acquired the regard of his subjects, but was never the object of their hatred, and he seems even in some degree to have possessed their love and affection to the last."

Froude and Hume may take extreme views of his character, and the truth probably lies midway between. We may not denounce Henry as the worst of kings, neither can we ardently admire nor quite forgive the man who beheaded Anne Boleyn, whom, when he was dying, it is alleged, he pronounced innocent—who sent Thomas Cromwell to the scaffold and grew in cruelty as years went on. The standard of our age is different from the standard of his, but even in those rude times

natural conscience, though darkened, was not dead, and Henry was not ignorant of the principles of morality as set forth in the word of God. He knew his duty, but he did it not. He loved the wrong, and he pursued it.

A man of noble presence, like Saul among the children of Israel; of intellectual abilities equal to those of Wolsey; an eminent linguist, conversing and writing accurately in four languages; a mechanical genius of no mean rank; familiar with the science of medicine; and withal a theologian little inferior to his favorite primate,—he might have shone in history as the Constantine of the sixteenth century, in fact, as he was in name, “the defender of the faith” whose foundations were laid on Calvary, whose dome pierces the heavens. Such as he was, God used him in the accomplishment of beneficent purposes. As he makes the wrath of man to praise him, so he makes the power of kings subservient to his Church, and wicked passions and wicked men may be employed, as were Noah’s carpenters, in building the ark which shall save the faithful and come to anchor in a regenerated world. “The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice, and the multitude of isles be glad thereof.”

Henry had indicated the order of the royal succession, and Edward VI., son of Jane Seymour, ascended the throne in 1547, then but ten years of age, but an example of “intellectual precocity seldom surpassed.” At his coronation three swords, representing the three kingdoms, were carried in the regal procession. Edward said there should be a fourth, meaning the Bible, which is the sword of the Spirit. “Without that,” said he,



“we are nothing ; we can do nothing. From that alone we obtain all honor, virtue, grace, salvation and whatsoever we have of divine strength.”

Edward Seymour, earl of Hertford, the king’s uncle, was appointed lord protector and made duke of Somerset. The Protector was a Protestant, and the Reformers took courage. Europe contributed some of its leading minds, in sympathy with the Reformation, to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Supported by these and the power of the throne, Cranmer took long strides in the work of Reform. Ridley also came to the primate’s aid. And who was Ridley ?

He fills an honorable place in the history of that age. Born in 1500, educated at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, at Pembroke Hall at Cambridge, and subsequently in the higher schools of Paris and Louvain, he soon became one of the leading men in the Protestant Reform. He boldly denounced the errors of Rome, was made bishop of Rochester by Henry VIII., and after the removal of Bonner was appointed bishop of London in the reign of Edward VI. Ridley was one of the most forcible preachers of the day. The people flocked to hear him. His sermons were fragrant with the gospel of Jesus, sweet as the singing of angels and resistless as the light. Of this man, at whose feet King Edward loved to sit, we shall speak more fully at another time. Suffice it now to say that he labored with Cranmer in the interests of Protestantism, and they rejoiced together in its early ascendancy throughout the British realm.

The famous Six Articles were repealed. In 1552 the Book of Common Prayer, prepared by Cranmer, was adopted, and the Forty-two Articles were passed.



Transubstantiation, prayers for the dead, auricular confession and the celibacy of the clergy were set aside. The communion was given to the laity in both kinds; the Church of England, with a confession of faith and an eminently scriptural liturgy, has at last separated herself from the Church of Rome, and with an independent existence, purged from the corruptions which had long deformed her ritual, a better day has dawned on England; which, though it may now and then be obscured by clouds, shall never have a setting.

This advance was made with all the caution which habitually marked the policy of Cranmer. But it was earnestly opposed. Gardiner and Bonner resisted every change with all the power of their mighty influence and all the violence of their malignant natures. The seizure of the abbey lands, which accrued largely to the benefit of a few, among whom was the duke of Somerset, brought troublous times. The Romanists were in arms. Somerset fell, and Northumberland took his place.

A little later there came a blow to the Reformation from which it did not soon recover. At the age of sixteen, in the year 1553, Edward VI. died, and shadows deep and dark gathered over the prospects of the Anglican Church. Bloody Mary ascended the throne. There are rejoicings on the banks of the Tiber, weeping and bloodshedding on the banks of the Thames. Julius III. now thinks to regain the power in the British realm which Clement VII. lost.

The primate of England sees a storm gathering and seeks shelter. Strange sounds come from the Continent, as of armies marshaling for the fight. The very waves of the sea as they break on the shore seem to sing a

mournful requiem, and some imagine they see the glare of funeral piles illumine the darkened air, as if a Nero had mounted the throne and an army of Beatus were gathering fagots to burn the enemies of Rome. These fears were not ungrounded. But we will not anticipate.

This much is certain : God reigns and Christ is King in Zion. What if "the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us ? He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh ; the Lord shall have them in derision."

Like streams which disappear from view and then emerge from their subterranean channels in broader currents and a deeper flow, so the Reformation, seemingly buried for a time, shall rise on some other day to claim all England as its own.

Ah yes ! Babylon, the mystery of iniquity, shall be destroyed, and Jesus shall reign from the Channel to Cape Wrath. Nay, he shall receive the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. Happy are all they who serve him. Happy the people who, with hands cleansed by his blood, lift the diadem to his thorn-scarred brow and crown him Lord of all.

CRANMER: PERSECUTION AND MARTYRDOM.

*"Quenched the violence of fire, . . . out of weakness were made strong."*

*The Church "has often been refined by the most violent persecutions of her enemies. She has not only survived the flames kindled against her, but, as refined gold comes out more beautiful from the furnace, left her dross behind her, and has been wrought into a more beautiful frame by the hand of her great Artificer."*

CHARNOCK.

*"God, in his ordinary providence, maketh use of means, yet is free to work without, above and against them, at his pleasure."*

CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAP. V. SEC. iii.

## CRANMER: PERSECUTION AND MARTYRDOM.

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THE reign of Edward VI. marked an interesting epoch in the English Reformation. It was the morning of a long-looked-for day. The sun which had emerged from the bosom of night had risen above the hills. The mists had lifted and passed away. The incense of psalms ascended through the still air, and was met by benedictions descending from heaven. But the promise of the morning is not always fulfilled. The sun may soon be obscured by clouds, and the calm be succeeded by storms. And so in the higher sphere of spiritual life there are what we call disappointments and great afflictions.

But there is a needs-be for these. They are blessings, though for a time disguised. The storm purifies the air and leaves a greener earth behind it. Adversity drives us to the shelter of the divine presence, where we learn needful lessons and go thence to nobler and more effective service.

The good King Edward died just as the Reformation had gained the ascendancy. His demise put every interest of the Reform in jeopardy. It was preceded by ominous signs and alarming events. Hyde Park in London and the meadows beyond were covered with

hail red as blood. The Thames seemed to have left its old channel, and the streets from St. Paul's church to Westminster Abbey suggested the Grand Canal and water-paths of Venice. Midnight darkness anticipated the going down of the sun, and was made more apparent by the flashes of lightning that appalled the stout-hearted, unaccustomed to fear.

What does all this mean? The superstitious thought it expressed God's hatred of heresy and his determination to destroy it. Others thought it was a premonition of dark days and fearful carnage which would try the faith of the Protestant Church and set back the work of Reform so auspiciously begun.

Now that Edward is dead there comes the question of succession. Although Henry VIII. had obtained a divorce from Catherine of Arragon on the alleged ground of illegitimate marriage, yet he had subsequently indicated his wish, in the event of Edward's death, that her daughter, the princess Mary, should succeed to the throne. When Edward's death seemed probable the papists felt assured of Mary's accession, and the Protestants feared it. But there were many who held that her title to the succession was not legal. The dukes of Suffolk and Northumberland urged the claims of Lady Jane Grey, the eldest daughter of Suffolk and the wife of Lord Guilford Dudley, the fourth son of Northumberland. Cranmer did the same, and for this offence Mary never forgave him.

No woman had ever occupied the throne of England. Northumberland thought to take advantage of the prejudice against a female sovereign, proclaim Lady Jane queen and put the reigns of government in the

hands of Lord Dudley. Lady Jane had great abilities and greater virtues. In learning she was even superior to Edward, who was about her own age, and with whom she had been educated with the most scrupulous care. Proficient in her own language, she also spoke and wrote with equal accuracy and readiness the French, Italian, Latin and Greek. She was also familiar with the Hebrew, Chaldean and Arabic. She was versed in the philosophy of Athens, and preferred Plato and Demosthenes to the pleasures of the park. She was at the same time fond of music, played skillfully on various instruments and sang with a sweetness of voice and a charm of expression rarely equaled. And all this when she was but sixteen years of age and the bride of Lord Dudley. But her crowning excellence was her piety. She had found Christ in his word, and early gave her heart to him in a devotion which never wavered.

For her the throne had no attractions. When it was suggested to her that she might succeed Edward as the sovereign of England, she declared her preference for private life. When Northumberland pressed her to accept the crown, she thrust it from her—"A crown," she said, "which hath been violently wrested from Catherine of Arragon, made more unfortunate by the punishment of Anne Boleyn and others that wore it after her; and wherefore should you have me add my blood to theirs, and be the third victim from whom this fatal crown may be ravished with the head that wears it?"

But the importunity of injudicious friends prevailed, and she went to the Tower, from whence she was proclaimed queen. For ten days only did she wear the



crown. Her adherents were far outnumbered by Mary's, and amid warlike demonstrations Lady Jane was displaced by the daughter of the divorced Catherine. Mary's ascension to the throne being announced on Cheapside, the people shouted, "God save the queen!" and the bells of St. Paul's church in joyful pealings sent the tidings far over London, whilst even Protestants, to whom Mary had made pledges of toleration, rejoiced in her enthronement.

When intelligence of all this was conveyed to Lady Jane she answered, "I better brook this message than that of my advancement to royalty." And what followed? Lady Jane's palace became her prison. She was adjudged guilty of high treason and condemned to death. The months went by, and at last this beautiful and godly woman, only nineteen years of age, after the execution of her husband and of others who had proclaimed her queen, was led out to execution on Tower Hill. Having reached the scaffold, she said to the lords and other spectators, "I beseech you all to bear me witness that I here die a true Christian woman, professing and avouching from my soul that I trust to be saved by the blood, passion and merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour only, and by no other means, casting far behind me all the works and merits of mine own actions, as things so short of the true duty I owe that I quake to think how much they may stand against me." She then knelt and repeated the fifty-first Psalm. Afterward she put the bandage over her eyes and felt for the block, saying, "What shall I do? where is it?" When conducted to the block she laid her head upon it and said, "Lord, into thine hands I commend my spirit."

The axe descended, and the next moment a gate unseen by mortal eyes swung noiselessly on its hinges of gold, and Lady Jane Grey, entering the metropolis of the universe, ascended a throne which shall stand for ever.

Thus the reign of Mary was inaugurated with the shedding of blood. Those who died on Tower Hill were charged with high treason, but this was not their only offence ; and it was not because of this at all that their execution was urged by Gardiner and others. It was because they were Protestants. They denied the supremacy of the pope. They rejected the real presence or treated it with indifference, and were chargeable with other departures from the Roman faith.

Mary had promised to continue to the Protestants the religious liberties they had enjoyed under Edward, but no sooner had she reached the throne than she violated her solemn pledge. She determined to re-establish Romanism, cost what it might. She boasted herself “a virgin sent from God to ride and tame the people of England.” Gardiner was appointed lord chancellor. Protestant bishops were ejected from their sees for heresy and wedlock, and their places were filled by papists. The marriages of the inferior clergy were pronounced illegal and their children bastards.

It was thought that by severe persecutions, rapidly multiplied, the Protestants would be driven into the Romish fold. Certainly, they would not give all they had, even life itself, for their groundless faith. Let prisons open and holocausts be kindled, and heresy will die before a twelvemonth is passed. At any rate, Mary will make the experiment. The so-called Holy Catholic Church—which the Church of Rome was not and never

had been—bids her Godspeed in her work of demolition and death.

Paul IV., the viceregent of God, spread the shield of St. Peter over the English throne and hurled anathemas at the heads of all heretics. The leaders of the Reformation were threatened and then imprisoned. Many fled to the land of John Knox, and found comparative quiet in its cities or in the seclusion of the Grampian Hills. Some went to the Continent, and at Frankfort-on-the-Main, at Geneva, where Calvin still taught, at Strassburg and Basle these exiles for righteousness' sake dwelt in peace.

Cranmer was urged to flee, but he determined to hold his ground. Perhaps he thought Mary was not forgetful of services he had rendered her when in Henry's day he had shielded her from her father's wrath. But he was imprisoned at Oxford jail, then deposed from his archbishopric and succeeded by Reginald Pole. Submission to the Romish faith was required of all classes; to refuse it was to suffer, and perchance to die.

Cardinal Pole, the pope's legate, professed to prefer milder means, hoping thus to win the erring back to the faith and avoid the reaction severity might produce. Gardiner insisted upon immediate resort to the stake and the headman's axe. Mary approved the chancellor's decision.

Then the Smithfield fires were kindled. John Rogers, who has been styled the proto-martyr of the Marian persecution, was burned February 4, 1555. He had been educated at Cambridge, then went to Antwerp in the capacity of a religious teacher. There he met Tyndale and Coverdale, and through their instructions

came to a knowledge of the truth. He assisted these exiled Protestants in the translation of the Bible into English, and afterward returned to his own country. Edward VI. made him a prebend of St. Paul's, and later he was appointed vicar of St. Sepulchre's church. After Mary's accession he was charged with having uttered heretical sentiments in a sermon preached at St. Paul's cross, and was sent to Newgate prison. The lord chancellor, Gardiner, demanded a full expression of his views, and especially as to the supremacy of the pope. Rogers answered, "I know none other head but Christ of his Catholic Church, neither will I acknowledge the bishop of Rome to have any more authority than any other bishop hath by the word of God and by the doctrine of the old and pure Catholic Church four hundred years after Christ." Such sentiments deserved death. Cursed be the man who denies the supremacy of the Roman pontiff! Rogers lingered in Newgate prison with common thieves until the day appointed for his execution. Then he was led to Smithfield and bound to the stake. He endured the suffering of flames without a murmur, verifying the promise of his Lord: "As thy days thy strength shall be." He lifted his hands toward heaven and calmly waited his deliverance. They who stood by saw only a chariot of fire bearing the spirit of the martyr upward, but there came another like the Tishbite's, to meet it, and along a path that brightened as it advanced the holy martyr ascended to glory. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

A little later John Bradford was condemned for denying the doctrine of transubstantiation, and sent to the

Tower, afterward to the Compter in the Poultry, and then to Newgate. At four o'clock on the morning of his death Smithfield was crowded with those who wished to look once more on the martyr's face and tell him how much they loved him. Five hours they waited for his coming. He was bound to the stake, and John Leaf, a young man, with him. He asked the people to help him with their prayers. He spake words of trust and declared his forgiveness of his murderers. Then he addressed his fellow-martyr, saying, "Be of good comfort, brother, for we shall have a merry supper with the Lord to-night." So died holy John Bradford. The influence of his life shall bless the earth and enrich heaven, and his name shall live for ever.

But time would fail us to speak of all the men and women who during the reign of Bloody Mary died in the flames at Smithfield. And for what? Because they denied the supremacy of the pope and the real presence. They were Protestants, and not papists. Liberty of conscience was denied them. They were required to reject the testimony of the word of God to the headship of Christ, the sufficiency of his sacrifice and the simplicity of his sacrament—or burn. They preferred the latter alternative. Their Lord died on the cross for them; they would die at the stake for him. They went out of the world along a path red with blood, but saw there the prints of their Saviour's feet, and were glad to be conformed to his painful death. They shall shine as the stars for ever and for ever.

We need not dwell on the restoration of the papal religion in England. The English Parliament had declared that the alienation of the abbey lands should

remain. They cared more for money and estates than for religion, and having secured the former by making its retention a condition of the restoration of papacy, they were ready to yield submission in all other matters. The dogma of transubstantiation was accepted. The mass for the dead was celebrated with great solemnity. The celibacy of the clergy was required. All that distinguished the Roman from the Protestant religion was revived. Proclamations were issued against heretics and heretical books. A system of espionage was established by which offenders against the Romish faith might be discovered and brought to early trial. It was ordered that all heretical writings should be burned. Any persons who secreted and read such writings or exhibited them to others were to be accounted rebels "and without any further delay to be executed by martial law."

Mary was determined to put down, if possible, all heresy and establish popery on a foundation that could never be moved. But she was perpetually disturbed with fears. What if Elizabeth should succeed her on the throne—Elizabeth the heretic, the daughter of the hated Anne Boleyn, for whom Henry had sacrificed her mother, ever a loyal papist? Besides, the relations of England to Paul IV. were not the most harmonious. He continued to demand the restoration of the possessions of the Church. He charged the English nation with sacrilege, and declared the persons who retained property which belonged to God to be in a state of "eternal damnation." There was guilt at the door of the Parliament. There was guilt in the Church that winked at this iniquity. There was guilt even on the throne, which was too weak to correct the wrong.



Mary was unhappy. She could not control the nation. As a Romanist she recognized the justice of the pontiff's claim, but the Parliament was unyielding in its opposition to his demand. Then she determined to build monasteries at her own expense. The Grey Friars, the Carthusians and the Knights of St. John were restored to their "rookeries." But this was a poor amend for the national wrong. Then, to increase her wretchedness, Philip, her husband, neglected her. The more she sued for his affections, the more heartless he grew. Her religion brought her no solace. She turned her tearful eyes toward heaven, but the dome of her false faith, decked with images of saints and the holy Virgin, and, high above all, an arrogant and cruel pontiff, intercepted a view of a happier life. So she turned to persecution. She will serve the Church, die in the faith and leave her soul with God.

She determines that Cranmer shall be the next to suffer. Already imprisoned in Oxford, he is summoned to Rome for trial. But the doors of his prison remain bolted and barred, and he cannot respond to the papal citation if he would: he is pronounced contumacious and condemned to death.

And now is enacted a species of cruelty for which we can find no name. Mary is resolved that Cranmer shall die, but she will take advantage of his constitutional weakness, and secure, if possible, a denial of the faith he has propagated in her realms. She knew more concerning his timidity than the world knew. The latter thought him courageous; she knew he was not. She directed that he should be treated with apparent sympathy and consideration. She would give an impression



of royal clemency and readiness to forgive. If he will but recant all shall be well. Higher ecclesiastical honors shall be his, or, if he prefers it, he shall live a private life without molestation or fear. He resisted the temptation for a time, but at last yielded to it, wrote his recantation, repeated it six times, and signed it in the presence of one Sydal and two Spanish friars. Mary has gained her point. Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, primate of the Reformed Church of England, has deserted the Reformation and returned to the Roman fold! The papists are jubilant. Cranmer is disgraced. Protestantism is overthrown. Reformers bow their heads in sorrow, with the exclamation of the dying Cæsar, "Et tu Brute!" Now let the bells of St. Paul's be rung and Te Deums be raised and the pontiff proclaim thanksgiving in Rome.

A month passed on and Cranmer is still a prisoner. His soul is pierced with many sorrows. His gray head is bowed in shame. He has saved his life, but at an infinite cost. Saved it? Not so. Mary and the court have decreed his death. His recantation cannot save him. It serves only to embitter his last hours and break his power.

On the 21st of March, 1556, the archbishop was led out to die. The heavens were dark with clouds and cold winds swept down the streets of Oxford. He was first conducted to St. Mary's church, where the sermon usual on such occasions was preached. He stood in the midst of the people, tall and commanding in person; a venerable man, the sight of whose mild, sorrowful face and gray hairs moved many to tears. As the sermon progressed, seemingly oblivious to what

was passing around him, he would stretch his hands toward heaven, great tears coursing down his cheeks, as if praying for divine mercy and a speedy passage home. Again he would drop his hands and bow his head, as if a sense of shame had suddenly overcome him. The sermon ended, liberty was given him to speak. First he offered a prayer in which he made humble confession of his sins and pleaded forgiveness for the same: "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, whose property is always to have mercy, for although my sins be great, yet thy mercy is greater. I crave nothing, O Lord, for mine own merits, but for thy Name's sake, that it may be glorified thereby, and for thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

Then he addressed the people, declaring his faith in all the principles of the Reformed religion, in all the teachings of Christ, his apostles and the holy prophets; denying the pope to be the supreme head of the Church, but Antichrist rather, and his doctrines false. He referred to his recantation, deploring that great offence against Christ and the truth, saying, "Now I come to the great thing that troubleth my conscience more than any other thing that I ever said or did in my life, and that is the sending abroad of writings contrary to the truth which I thought in my heart, and writ for fear of death and to save my life, if it might be; and that is all such bills which I have written or signed with mine own hand since my degradation, wherein I have written many things untrue. And forasmuch as my hand offended in writing contrary to my heart, therefore my hand shall first be punished, for if I may come to the fire it shall first be burned. As for the

pope, I refuse him as Christ's enemy and Antichrist, with all his false doctrine." These were brave words. Like Peter, in an unguarded hour he had denied his Lord, and like Peter he is now ready to die for Him whom he cannot again deny. Conscious of his own utter weakness, he has taken hold on divine strength. The grace of Christ sustains him. His last utterances, with the glare of flames on his face, are in behalf of the truth and his injured but forgiving Lord. The papists are disappointed and enraged. They hurry him away to the stake in front of Balliol College; they bind him to it with fiendish delight; they kindle the fires, and then, standing by, mock the martyr. He is calm. His trust in Christ wavers not. The hand which wrote the recantation is held out to the flames, and he says again and again, "Oh this unworthy right hand! This hand hath offended." And so he died.

John Strype has touchingly said: "He was not buried, as many of his predecessors were, in his own cathedral church, nor enclosed in a monument of marble or touchstone. Nor had he any inscription to set forth his praises to posterity; no shrine to be visited by devout pilgrims, as his predecessors, St. Dunstan and St. Thomas, had. No! Cranmer's martyrdom is his monument, and his name will outlast an epitaph or shrine." The March winds, sporting with his ashes, scattered them along the highways and byways of Oxford; but the seeds of divine truth which he planted in England have borne immortal fruitage, and, casting the mantle of charity over the faults of the good primate, we shall ever revere the memory of him who laid down his life for Christ, and who, though

sentenced by papists to quenchless fires, passed the domes of St. Mary's church and Balliol College, ascending in triumph to a home above the fitful sky.

Thomas Cranmer was a man of great attainments in divinity and in the civil and canon laws. He was familiar with the writings of ancient and modern times ; "there were no councils, canons, decrees of the popes, which he had not read." His great library attracted the attention of scholars, and his own productions bore the impress of a master mind. His piety was beyond question, and although it received a temporary shock, yet when the storm had passed by it showed itself more deeply rooted than before.

"The primate of England," says D'Aubigné, "held a torch in his hand which had not the brilliancy of that borne by Luther and Calvin, but the tempest that blew upon it for fifteen or twenty years could not extinguish it. Sometimes he was seized with terror ; as he heard the lion roar he bent his head, kept in the background and concealed the truth in his bosom ; but again he rose and again held out to the Church the light he had saved from the fury of the tyrant. He was a reed and not an oak—a reed that bent too easily, but through this very weakness he was able to do what an oak with all its strength could never have accomplished. The truth triumphed."

Hume's estimate of Cranmer's character deserves here a place : "He was undoubtedly a man of merit, possessed of learning and capacity and adorned with sincerity, candor and beneficence and all those virtues which were fitted to render him useful and amiable in society. His moral qualities procured him universal respect, and the

courage of his martyrdom, though he fell short of the rigid inflexibility observed in many, made him the hero of the Protestant party."

His constitutional weakness of purpose and his dread of suffering, in the judgment of many people, mantled his life with obloquy. He was quite removed from the moral grandeur of Huss and Savonarola. He cannot be ranked with Ridley and Latimer, who in all circumstances were steadfast and unwavering in their devotion to Christ and his known truth, and went more triumphantly than he to their death. Thousands of saints of whom the world was not worthy, though comparatively unknown, are more unhesitatingly accorded the crown of martyrdom than was Cranmer. Yet there was much of grandeur about his last hours. That outstretched hand, that offending hand, wavering not as the flames consumed it, pleads in behalf of the man who with all his weaknesses was truly great. And it is evident that Cranmer's vacillation and subserviency to the royal will, which brought him great suffering at the last, was overruled to the advantage of the Reformation. The English people were conservative. Their advance was slow. If Cranmer had possessed the spirit of Calvin or Knox, and had measures which prevailed in Scotland been imperatively urged in England, the Reformation might have broken down before Henry laid off the crown. But the slower process, largely consequent upon Cranmer's lack of moral courage, ultimately secured the triumph of truth and minimized the power of Rome in the British Isles. And as the day which has been often obscured with clouds may terminate in splendor, so Cranmer's closing hours radiated the glory

of that matchless throne which he shall for ever share with his Lord.

The burning of Cranmer was for the papacy a damaging act. Had his recantation been followed by the redemption of the pledge to spare his life, the primate of all England might have been for ever disgraced in the esteem of friends and enemies alike. But Mary and her court unwittingly conferred upon him the highest boon at their disposal when they burnt him on the Oxford square and published to the world his bold confession. The Reformed Church took heart again. The Romish Church gnashed her teeth in impotent rage.

The death of Cranmer gave a new impetus to the Reformation, and the fires of persecution which burned on only served to multiply converts to the faith for which the primate died. The nation seemed just ready to spring to its feet and crush the religion that delighted in carnage and drank the blood of the saints. Mary was hated by the very people who at her coronation rang the cathedral bells and shouted, "Long live the queen!" and she grew more unhappy as the end of her bloody reign drew nigh. She wandered through the chambers of her palace seeking rest and finding none. Her husband deserted her, returned to Spain, and to her letters, blurred with tears and written with her life's blood, made no answer.

On the 14th of November, 1558, after a bloody reign of five years, Queen Mary went to her account. On the same day Cardinal Pole also died. It seemed fitting that the persecuting queen and her archbishop, "the hangman and scourge of the Church of England," should depart together.



With the demise of these supporters of the papacy the fires of persecution burned out and peace returned. It was God's purpose to make his people glad according to the days wherein they had been afflicted and the years wherein they had seen evil.

Not wishing to interrupt our narrative of Cranmer's work, we have passed by two noted characters who deserve more extended notice—men who did much to advance the Reformation, on whose memory there rests no cloud such as obscured the fame of Bilney and at a later day of Cranmer. We refer to Latimer and Ridley, who joined the army of martyrs a few months before the English primate. Latimer was a brave defender of the truth. He loved life and enjoyed it, but the honor of Christ and of the evangel was more to him than life. He had confronted the English bishops with a bold recital of their frailties and a denunciation of their offences. He had dared to tell Henry VIII. that he was the chief of sinners and without repentance would perish. He had been archbishop of Worcester, but having opposed the Six Articles was imprisoned, and, although liberated after the accession of Edward VI., declined the mitre, yet continued to preach the gospel for which he had suffered. When he had nearly numbered his threescore years and ten, by request of Archbishop Cranmer he occupied apartments in Lambeth Palace. Everything associated with the holy man is invested with interest. The Christian traveler, having lingered among the tombs of Westminster Abbey and listened to the sweet choral service, crosses the Thames to Lambeth borough and seeks the palace which was the home of the Canterbury bishop. As he approaches



it he muses on the olden time and the holy dead. The old gray towers speak to him of solemn ages which have borne their record on high. "In this now desolate and silent room," he says, "when the slant rays of the rising sun shot through that narrow casement and quivered on the wall of its deep embrasure, good old Latimer put out his lamp, for the pure light of heaven fell on the broad pages and brazen clasps of his open Bible; and the old man, having deeply drunk from the fountains of truth, rose up to throw open the casement, to look out upon the glistening waters of the broad Thames, and to breathe the morning air fresh with the rushing tide of the full river. Here he stood, his heart swelling with love to the Giver of all good, thanking and praising him for the blessings of light and air, so unheeded by many, because so common to all, but precious to those who like himself had dwelt in prisons such as the old Tower or Bocardo. Here he stood, the light breeze playing with his silver hair and fluttering the leaves of his book, till the rustling sound called him back to his delightful studies."

A little later he fancies he hears the chapel-bell ring, and sees Latimer, supported by his servant, pass along the old corridor and down to the place of prayer. The grave and gentle Cranmer welcomes the beloved father, and heaven seems to come down to earth as they join in the solemn service and anticipate the communion of the redeemed in the temple not made with hands or in the shade of trees that skirt the river of life.

But Mary ascends the throne, and Latimer exchanges Lambeth Palace for a secluded vicar's home in the North. Next we find him a prisoner in the old Tower.

And what a history has that venerable pile! Here kings and queens have found a home and worn an uneasy crown; here men and women, nobly born, have looked death in the face, then bared their necks to the headsman's axe. Here Sir Thomas More and Bishop Fisher, Anne Boleyn and Lady Jane Grey, Sir Walter Raleigh and many others, met their fate. Here Latimer was imprisoned, and Ridley with him, and afterward both were sent to the Oxford jail. They had been charged with denying the doctrine of transubstantiation and the propitiatory sacrifice of the mass. They maintained that Christ had made one oblation which was sufficient for the sins of the world and for all the ages. By this declaration they would stand.

On the 16th of October, 1555, they were led to the stake, passing under the window of the prison in which Cranmer was confined. Ridley preceded his fellow-martyr, and as the venerable Latimer approached he hastened to meet and embrace him, saying, "Be of good heart, brother; God will either assuage the flame or else he will strengthen us to abide it." A priest who stood near said, "Recant, and you shall both live."—"So long as the breath is in my body," said Ridley, "I will never deny my Lord Christ and his known truth." Likewise answered Latimer. Then they took their places, one on each side of the stake to which they were bound with an iron chain. As the flames rose about them, the godly Latimer, now past his eightieth year and about to put on immortal youth, with a clear and joyful voice said to his brother, whose face he could not see, "Be of good courage, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's

grace, in England as I trust shall never be put out." And thus they witnessed a good confession, as did their Lord before Pontius Pilate, and addressed each other in words of cheer. They glorified God in the fires, then went to that peaceful heaven where the flames of persecution shall never be kindled.

With the coronation of Elizabeth peace was restored to England. The steeple-towers rang their welcome to the Protestant queen. The headsman laid away his axe and the smith his bloody chain. Protestantism, by reason of the infirmity which belongs to man, may sometimes wear a scowling face and utter threats, but its habit is to make its conquests by peaceful means, winning by love those whom Romanism would drive with bayonets, or, failing in this, trample in the dust.

Elizabeth was twenty-four years of age when she ascended the throne, and for forty-five years she reigned over England wisely and well. The Bible she received from the hands of a child as she passed under a triumphal arch on her coronation day furnished the principles which determined her rule. Errors she doubtless committed. The religion she established was not without its blemishes; but the Reformation was advanced with becoming caution and brought incalculable good to her realm.

The queen claimed, as did Henry her father, that the sovereign of the state was the head of the English Church, and assumed prerogatives which were alike unscriptural, corrupting and dangerous. But this act of supremacy, which gave to Elizabeth temporal and spiritual power, put an end to all appeals to Rome and revoked all the laws relating to heresy. The Act of

Uniformity, whilst it left the people free as concerned their doctrinal belief, required the observance of the same rites and ceremonies, which Elizabeth, as head of the Church, was empowered to appoint and change at pleasure.

The queen sought at the same time to conciliate the Romanists. Hence in the revision of Edward's liturgy she caused to be erased passages offensive to the pope, such as that in the Litany, "the tyranny of the bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities," and certain terms respecting kneeling in the sacrament which were distasteful to those who believed in the real presence. The English Church occupied middle ground between Romanism and the Protestantism of Scotland and of the Continent. It retained in its polity and worship much that was papistic. The supremacy of the sovereign was only a transfer of power which the pope had claimed.

The Anglican Episcopacy, as is well known, made distinctions in the ministry. It had its bishops, priests, and deacons, and traced its succession from the apostles through the Church of Rome. The Protestantism of Scotland maintained the parity of the clergy—equality in prerogative and rank. But the episcopacy of that day was more liberal than it is in ours. Ordination by presbytery was recognized as valid, and ministers thus ordained officiated in English churches, presided over English parishes and maintained intimate and fraternal relations with the clergy who had received episcopal ordination. The distinction which was then made was one of office, not of order. Thomas Cranmer said, "The bishops and priests were at one time one thing,

and were not two things, but both one office in the beginning of Christ's religion." This was the prevalent opinion. It is otherwise now. Pity that it should be so. Think of the ordination of such men as Chalmers, Edwards and the Alexanders; of Spurgeon, John Hall and the Hoges—men called of God to preach his evangel and greatly honored in their work—being denied by any branch of the Christian Church in this age of the world! Exclusive episcopal ordination is an unscriptural dogma; apostolic succession is a myth. But let these pass. The Church of England has embraced in its communion stalwart saints and has done a noble work for Christ.

Elizabeth was fond of pompous ceremony in imposing cathedrals, and would have her clergy clothed in gorgeous vestments when performing the solemn rites of the Church. She favored images of the saints, the crucifix and a ritual closely approximating to that of Rome. She would have insisted on the celibacy of the clergy had not her secretary Cecil opposed it, and her sacramentarian views were closely allied to those of the papacy.

The characteristics of the early English Church have been continued with little modification to the present. The sacramentarianism of the High Church of England is alarming to the evangelicals, and the elimination of the latter element may be only a question of time, foreshadowed in the Reformed Episcopalianism of America, an organized protest against the assumptions of the mother Church.

The Act of Conformity at the commencement of Elizabeth's reign was distasteful to many Protestants.

The nonconformists or Puritans (so called because they desired greater purity in worship) said they could not in conscience submit to the act, and deplored the engrafting upon the Reformed Church of the once-discarded superstitions of Rome. This controversy increased in bitterness, and the Puritans became the subjects of a persecution which threatened to rival the papal Inquisition.

We cannot trace the history of Puritanism. It grew with the years. James I. considered its principles republican. It struck at the power of the throne. Episcopacy was more in harmony with monarchy. Hence his favorite maxim, "No bishop, no king," and he determined that the Puritans should conform or be banished from the land. This controversy drove many to the New World. They preferred exile to submission, and freedom of conscience in the wilderness to the comforts of ancestral homes and the domination of a prelatic Church. Hence the settlements in New England and the kindling of gospel light along our eastern coast which now shines across the continent. Hence, too, the establishment of a government the principles of which are the perfection of human wisdom, and the fruits of which, among a people who fear God, are always beneficent and above all price.





JOHN KNOX, THE REFORMER OF SCOTLAND.

*“ Clouds and darkness are round about him : righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.”*

*“ Trust God when providences seem to run quite contrary to promises.”*

WATSON.

*“ Christ doth gather and defend his Church, and subdue their enemies ; furnisheth his ministers and people with gifts and graces, and maketh intercession for them.”*

LARGER CATECHISM, Ans. to Question 54.

## JOHN KNOX, THE REFORMER OF SCOTLAND.

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AS God in the mysterious exercise of his will permitted sin to enter the world and overruled it to his glory, so in every age he has given certain license to wicked men and erroneous doctrine, yet has set bounds to the power of the one and the extension of the other, and demonstrated his superiority to both by raising up human agencies through which he has secured the triumph of the righteous and the establishment of the truth. It is the sword of the Lord and of Gideon that prevails, and oftentimes the insignificance of the agency magnifies the power which employs it.

It is profitable to study divine providences as they relate to the Church. God is found in history. In the great crises of the world heaven seems to touch the earth, and men awake to the fact that there is a God who takes cognizance of the race and controls the machinery of the world's affairs.

With a view to our spiritual profit we propose to consider some of the salient points in the Scottish Reformation, and especially as associated with the life of that remarkable man who was the chief instrument of its inauguration and success.

In the suburbs of Haddington—or, as some believe,

in the village of Giffordgate—Scotland, in the year 1505, was born of honorable parentage a child who, to use the language of the historian Froude, “became in that extraordinary age its most extraordinary man, and whose character became the mould in which the later fortunes of his country were cast.”

This son was born four years after Calvin, and in the same year that Martin Luther entered the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt. He took his name, it is supposed, from the paternal mansion, which was called the Knock. It was situated near the birthplace of William Wallace and the ancestral home of Mary Stuart, and perchance there was sounded in the olden time, before Knox was born, the bugle-cry of contending families which gave prophetic intimation of the long-fought battles of later ages.

Young Knox early evinced an unusual strength of intellect and thirst for knowledge, which induced his parents to give him a liberal education. He was accordingly sent to the grammar-school in Haddington, and subsequently, when sixteen years of age, to the University of Glasgow. Education then was not general. Of Latin schools there were but few. The Greek was an unknown language in Scotland until the middle of the sixteenth century, and Hebrew was not taught in the schools until a much later period. Knox availed himself of all the advantages his own country afforded, and at mid-life, on the Continent, attained to considerable proficiency in Hebrew, and so became the better qualified for the study of the Old-Testament Scriptures.

At the university in Glasgow he had for his preceptor in philosophy and theology a man who was regarded as

one of the best educators of the day, especially in the department which he filled. We refer to John Mair, a man of rugged intellect, strong convictions and progressive thought. The intellectual bias and the moral character which are to give direction to all the future of life are often early determined by the influences and associations of the school. It is a serious reflection which all parents would do well to consider. Of this we have an illustration in the case of John Knox. As Calvin was indebted for many of the principles which constituted him a successful Reformer to that eminent French jurist, Pierre de l'Étoile, his preceptor at Orléans, so Knox received from John Mair the germs of the Scottish Reformation. The pupil outstripped the teacher. He entered realms of thought and compassed potent facts of human life of which the Glasgow professor had little or no conception. But the latter gave to the greater mind of the pupil the impetus which carried him on and the direction which determined his goal. Mair held sentiments with respect to the authority of the pope and the prerogatives of kings which few held, and a smaller number dared to express—sentiments which found their fruitage at a later day in religious and civil freedom: on the one hand, freedom of conscience and the humiliation of the papal power; on the other, the lifting up of the people as the source of all civil authority and the court of highest appeal. These sentiments, which had previously been held by a few on the Continent, were readily imbibed by the young student. They commended themselves to his innate sense of right, and he was prepared to follow them on to their legitimate results.

About this time his attention was called to the writings of the early Christian Fathers. He was especially interested in Jerome, who exalted the Bible as the rule of faith, and in Augustine, who, after the example of Paul the apostle, magnified the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ. Here he found the principles of Protestantism, the faith of the apostolic Church.

The light of distant centuries overleaps the Dark Ages and begins to pierce the clouds which have long darkened the British Isles. John Knox looks up with glad surprise. The gray light betokens day. There is some great good in store for Scotland. Himself a priest of the Romish Church, he becomes increasingly dissatisfied with his traditional faith. The papacy was alarmingly corrupt. The clergy held half the wealth of the nation. These so-called successors of the apostles had not the spirit of the men who surrendered all for Christ. They clothed themselves with worldly pomp and secular power. They were privy counselors, the lords of sessions and the magnates of Parliament. They lived in pleasure and gloried in their shame. Obedient to the canons of the Church which required celibacy, they were notoriously unclean, and the general morals were corrupted by their vicious example. The priests were also ignorant. Many of them did not understand the language of their mumbled service, and knew as little of the tenets of their corrupt religion. The bishops never preached. This work they delegated to mendicant monks, who were as ignorant and mercenary as are the mendicants of the Greek Church to-day.

History tells us that the kingdom swarmed with

ignorant, idle, luxurious monks, who like locusts devoured the fruits of the earth and filled the air with pestilential infection—with friars white, black and gray; canons regular and of St. Anthony; Carmelites, Cordeliers, Dominicans, Franciscans, Conventuals, and Observantines, Jacobins; monks of Tyrone; Holy Knights of St. John of Jerusalem; nuns of St. Austin, St. Clair, St. Scholastica and St. Catherine of Sienna; and others, miserable libels even on ordinary depraved humanity.

The gospel which Paul and Peter preached was almost unknown. What little of truth remained in the creeds of the Church was buried under the rubbish of human inventions. The altar on which was celebrated the mass shut out of view the spiritual cross, and the Virgin Mary, around whom was grouped an army of so-called saints, supplanted the only Advocate and prevailing Intercessor of the Church.

The seemingly devout worshipers went from the mass to the ale-house, and from the confessional to the repetition of their sins; a scriptural faith and holy living were alike unknown.

All this is the legitimate fruit of papacy. Where it has had undisputed sway it has kept the people in ignorance and substituted the grossest superstitions for saving truth. It is so now. Without Christ there can be no salvation, either from the condemnation or the defilement of sin. The history of the world declares this. Yet there is a tendency, inherent in our fallen nature, to will-worship, to a corrupt religion, the fruit of mere human ingenuity, which stultifies the natural conscience, and, while promising heaven to its devotees, paves the way to hell.



Such was the religion of Scotland. It was dark and cold as the mists which came up from the sea. Its cathedrals were architecturally impressive, of vast proportions, filled with all the furnishings of a religion which was sensuous only, whilst from crypt to vaulted roof the air was laden with moral death, seldom stirred by the breathings of even a languid spiritual life.

At the same time the people of Scotland were not impervious to the truth. They were such stuff as stalwart saints are made of. Give them a little light and they crave more, and will have it. And even at this period, despite the depression of the dominant religion, they were brave, resolute and powerful, stern as the mountains of the North, and unbridled as the air which swept the Highlands and the moors.

Bannockburn told the story of their prowess, and England, unable to subjugate her Teutonic brothers, was driven back to the Southland, the border bristling with bayonets and guarded by frowning castles which lifted their dark fronts into the murky sky. Such was the land of our fathers, the birthplace of that civil and religious freedom which has extended its beneficent rule to our Western World.

It may aid our understanding of the Scottish Reformation to glance at some events which prepared the way for its inauguration.

Patrick Hamilton, the great-grandson of James II., and one year the senior of John Knox, was made abbot of Ferne when only thirteen years of age, and played an important part in the opening drama of the Reformation. He had been a student in the University of

Paris. Here he heard of Martin Luther, and, looking eastward, he saw the light which, kindled in the valleys of the Rhine and on the shores of the Rhone, was ascending the Alps to shine thence over the darker regions lying to the westward.

Hamilton was a devout student of the sacred languages, and soon was able to read the word of God in the original tongues. Here he found the Christ of revelation and the doctrine of justification by faith. Having returned to Scotland, Cardinal Beaton of St. Andrews learned of the young man's defection from the faith, charged him with heresy and declared him worthy of death. Hamilton deemed it best to return to Europe, that he might learn more concerning this new religion. In Wittenberg he met Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon and Francis Lambert, who helped him on to a clearer knowledge of the truth. Then at Marburg he formed the acquaintance of William Tyndale and John Frith, and in the armory of the gospel they equipped themselves for holy war.

From his peaceful retreat the young Reformer felt constrained to depart, that he might show his countrymen the "more excellent way." Hear now how clearly he expresses that precious faith which, preserved in the Bible and hidden in the valleys of Northern Italy, came to him as from the very lips of Jesus and his apostles. These are his own words: "The law showeth us our sin, the gospel showeth us the remedy for it. The law showeth us our condemnation, the gospel showeth us our redemption. The law saith to the sinner, Pay thy debt; the gospel saith, Christ hath paid it. The law saith, Thou art a sinner; despair—thou

shalt be damned ; the gospel saith, Thy sins are forgiven thee ; be of good comfort—thou shalt be saved.”

In his own country he preached to noblemen and their families who were his own kindred, some of whom believed. Then he ventured to proclaim the truth in public places and to common people. Some heard him gladly ; others pronounced him a heretic and reported his words to the ecclesiastical autocrat of St. Andrews.

Hamilton was induced to appear at a conference at St. Andrews for the ostensible purpose of calmly discussing the principles of his faith. Then followed a mock trial, after which the Reformer was cast into the old sea-tower, which still remains, and on a wintry day in 1528 he was burned at the stake. With his dying breath he prayed for his murderers, and then said, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” When nearly burned through the waist by the fiery chain which bound him to the stake, and when power of speech was gone, a spectator, addressing him from the crowd, asked that if he still had faith in the views for which he was condemned he should indicate it by a sign. Thereupon he lifted his mutilated hand and held it aloft until he died, thus declaring his unfailing trust in the Crucified One and pointing the way to that heaven which opened for his entrance.

Thus died, at the age of twenty-four, the proto-martyr of the Scottish Reformation. On the day that he died the papacy unwittingly kindled a fire which shone over all Scotland, in the flames of which it was itself consumed.

Some of the nobility of Scotland were deeply affected by the martyrdom of this royal youth. Does a Roman cardinal hold in his hands the lives of men nobly born ?

Are we answerable for our faith to a cruel hierarchy? Whereunto shall this matter grow? Then came the inquiry, "For what did Hamilton die?" Many sought an answer, and in finding it discovered the truth, and so God made the wrath of man to praise him.

A few years later the earl of Arran was appointed to administer the government during the minority of the queen. His influence advanced the Reformation. The papacy, which always shuns the light, and to-day joins hands with infidelity in the effort to exclude the Bible from our public schools, had withheld the Scriptures from the people. The man who dared to read and interpret for himself God's holy word was accursed. But the Scottish Parliament granted to all the privilege of reading the Sacred Scriptures in their own language. The word of God was no longer bound. The blessed evangel went abroad. The music of heaven, like that heard on the Bethlehem plain, carried its sweet harmonies down the valleys and echoed among the hills.

But Romanism will not die without a protracted struggle. It burnishes its armor, masses its forces and goes out to the fight. Ere long attention is directed to a lone man who, David-like, defies the enemies of Israel, not rashly provoking the rage of the papacy, but quietly pursuing his mission as a preacher of the truth. In the open fields the common people crowd about him to hear the story of Calvary. He tells them of Christ and says little of the Church. He points to the blood of the Lamb that was slain, and says, "There is your atonement," and so diverts their minds from the superstitions which had shut the Saviour from their sight. It was George Wishart, brother of the laird of Pittarrow.

He is ever about his Master's business. Montrose and Dundee "felt and owned the power of his heavenly eloquence."

By and by there follows him, wherever he goes, a thoughtful man of small stature and intellectual countenance, whose love to Wishart, like that of Jonathan for David, passes that of women. The holy fire of the preacher burns into his soul and consumes the last remains of a superstitious, Christless faith.

The day that an attempt was made to assassinate the great preacher this attendant drew his sword, and never returned it to its sheath. But the earl of Bothwell is mightier than the evangelist Wishart. The latter is seized. His faithful friend prefers to share his fate. "God bless you!" said Wishart; "one is sufficient for a sacrifice;" and so they parted. That young man who goes sorrowfully away is none less than John Knox—he who is to carry on the work which Wishart lays down.

Wishart was tried and condemned to death. They put on him a black robe, attached bags of gunpowder to his person, and with a rope around his neck and a chain about his waist led him to the stake. When he came to the place of execution he knelt down and rose again, thrice repeating the prayer, "O thou Saviour of the world, have mercy upon me! Father of heaven, I commend my spirit into thy hands." A trumpet sounds: it is the signal for the execution. Wishart is bound to the stake and the fires are kindled. Archbishop Beaton looks from his castle-window and "feeds his eyes with the martyr's torments." But there is a chariot, such as the Tishbite's of old, which he saw not, bearing the soul

of the holy Wishart to heaven, where the cruel, unrepentant minions of Antichrist can never go.

Some who witnessed the martyr's death said, "Beaton is Wishart's murderer, and he shall die." "Law, in its pure and proper sense," says a modern historian, "there was none in Scotland; the partition-lines between evil and good were obliterated in the general anarchy, and right struggled against wrong with such ambiguous weapons as the wild justice of nature suggested."

On another day three men made their way along the dark passages of the castle to the chamber of Beaton, into which they forced an entrance. They bade the cardinal "repent him of his former wicked life," after which they smote him with their swords until he died. Then from the window of the castle from which he had witnessed the execution of Wishart they exposed the dead cardinal to the view of the multitude now gathered about the castle-gate, and then carried the body to the old sea-tower in which Hamilton had been imprisoned and before which Wishart had been burned.

We do not justify the act, though Beaton deserved to die. It was lawless justice smiting down one beyond the reach of law. It suggests the doom of Ahab. The murderer dies for his crimes. And on that day sturdy hands rang the death-knell of papacy in the land of the holy martyrs. Rome is humbled. The night is past and the day is at hand.

Now John Knox appears again upon the scene, and his subsequent career is woven as the woof into all Scottish history until the final establishment of the Reformation under the shadow of which Scotland sits to-day, none daring to molest her or make her afraid.



A year after the death of Archbishop Beaton, Knox was quietly engaged as a teacher in St. Andrews. In the chapel of the castle he read and expounded the Scriptures. These exercises attracted the attention of men of note, into whose minds the gospel in its sweet simplicity was finding entrance. Near by the castle stood the parish church. Here Christ was preached. Faith and holiness were the burdens of each discourse. All this was strange and new, and men listened as for their lives. The preacher, a converted monk late from the monastery in Stirling, was John Rough. He was a man of great power. His preaching was not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but it was accompanied with spiritual fervor and went directly to the mark. He needed an assistant. He said John Knox was the man he wanted. The people approved his choice. Knox hesitated. The undertaking was great, and he felt himself inadequate for it. A day was appointed for the election of an assistant. Rough preached a sermon, and at the close of it, looking at Knox in the pew, he said, "Brother, be not offended. In the name of God and of his Son Jesus Christ I charge you that you refuse not this holy vocation." Knox was startled, burst into tears and hastened from the house. But he was not the man to disobey God, and, assured that the call was from him, he entered on the work.

The parish church is crowded to hear the new preacher. He makes the arches ring with his vehement eloquence. He is a radical preacher. His hearers said, "Others sneed the branches of the papistree, but he strykes at the roote to destroy the bole." He steps boldly out from the papacy, carrying not a shred of



its superstition with him. He has no words of apology for Rome. He is not content with an attempt to reform what is beyond all redemption. He does not propose to lop off this excrescence and reduce that. He would as soon think to revivify a corpse by amputating a limb. He says the Romish Church is the synagogue of Satan, the pope is the Man of sin, and the priesthood, as a body, is more degenerate than the men who procured the death of Jesus of Nazareth. The whole hierarchy is a putrefaction, and should be buried so deep that it shall never again pollute the air or have a resurrection. "Prove that the Church is corrupt," said the people. He said, "I will;" and he did it. His lone voice in St. Andrews church reached farther than the walls that shut him in. All Scotland heard it, and was moved as by an earthquake. Converts to the Reformation multiplied as the drops of the morning. Rome was alarmed. Something must be done, and done quickly. A French fleet hastens to St. Andrews. The people see the white sails at the foot of every street, and soon discover that they are surrounded by the enemy.

Then comes the contest, but it is unequal. The garrison surrenders. The castle is taken. John Knox and many others go aboard the French galleys, and, in violation of solemn pledges, are bound with chains. They are conveyed to France. The ships which carry them lie in the river Loire. The heretics are commanded to recant, and are threatened with tortures if they refuse. They say they are ready to die, but not to deny the faith. Once the galleys returned to the vicinity of St. Andrews, and when John Knox saw the spire of the parish chapel, though denied his liberty and sick of a

fever, he said, "I shall not depart this life until that my tongue shall glorify God's goodly name in that place." The fleet returned to France. After nineteen months of imprisonment it was supposed that heresy had received its deathblow in the consent of the Scotch Parliament to the marriage of the beautiful queen Mary to the dauphin of France, and in the belief of this Knox was contemptuously liberated. For Rome it was a great blunder. John Knox is greater than the Scottish queen, a mightier factor in the world's history than the thrones of Scotland and France combined. The day shall prove it.

After his liberation Knox sojourned for a time in London. The Reformation had made some advance in England, but the deplorable ignorance of the clergy and their general unfitness as teachers brought reproach upon the Protestant Church and endangered its continuance. There was an urgent need for great minds to guide the people—minds that could rise above all the superstitions and sophistries of Rome and demonstrate the overwhelming importance of the issues involved. Then Knox was again summoned to active service. He threw his mighty energies into the work. His trumpet gave no uncertain sound. The corruptions of the papacy were set forth in unmistakable and convincing terms. His appeals to piety and patriotism determined many to espouse the Protestant faith.

His growing popularity suggested his permanent settlement in London, and Archbishop Cranmer appointed him to the vacant living of All Hallows in that city. This tempting benefice was promptly declined. He assigned as his reason for so doing his conviction that the

English Church itself needed to be reformed. It had not taken sufficiently high ground. There was a temporizing with corruption and an adherence to popish forms which were exceedingly distasteful to Knox, and, as he believed, greatly prejudicial to the interests of the Reformation. It was about this time that Edward VI. offered him a bishopric. But he was not to be bought even at such a price.

He objected to the dogma that there was no ordination to the ministry except by the imposition of the hands of a bishop. He protested against the retention in the English Church of ignorant clergy whose services consisted in the mumbling of prayers, the singing of the Litany and the chanting of vespers. They were not competent to teach. By their necessities the people pleaded for the bread of life, and these priests could not give it—for a sight of Jesus, and they could not impart what they themselves did not possess. Then, too, the Church made little distinction between virtue and vice. Notoriously wicked persons came to the Lord's table, and there was no effort to exclude them. Church discipline was unknown.

To the mind of Knox, under such an order of things reversion to popery was only a question of time, and on the accession of Queen Mary to the throne of England it came. Under the reign of Mary all the fears of the Reformer were more than realized. The Reformation had brought some liberty of conscience to England; the restored papacy denied it. Persecution was revived. The heavens were red with flames and the earth with blood.

Knox was urged by his friends to go to the Continent,

but he refused. They besought him with tears, for his own sake, for theirs, for the cause he had so bravely espoused. He at last yielded to their importunity and crossed the English Channel to Dieppe. There he lingered for a while, that he might receive some intelligence from England; then traveled into France and Switzerland. After a time he returned to Dieppe, anxious to receive tidings from home, and again set out for Switzerland. The fame of Calvin had spread over all Europe. Geneva was his home, and hither Knox repaired.

The meeting of these two men was an important event. The representatives of the Reformation in England and Switzerland clasped hands. Their hearts flowed together. A tender affection was formed that day which grew with the years and was never disturbed or broken.

We cannot speak at length of Knox's subsequent labors at Frankfort-on-the-Main, where he preached to English refugees, was disturbed in his work by an unhappy division in the Church, and was constrained to abandon it to others. Again he returned to Geneva, waiting patiently for the time when he might resume his labors in his own land.

Here for the present we shall leave the Reformer. In that quiet retreat he prepared himself for a grander career. His relations to Calvin were helpful. His study of God's word in the original languages fitted him for the more effective defence of the truth. As he worshipped in the great cathedral which crowned the hill, as he walked in thoughtfulness along the shores of Lake Lemman, as he looked on the green hills which cast their

shadows at evening over the peaceful expanse of waters, as he gazed at the snow-capped Alps, Mont Blanc piercing the clouds, its summit lost to sight in the unclouded heavens,—his soul was expanded and uplifted ; his reverence for God, who spread these scenes of grandeur and beauty about him, became a deeper sentiment of the heart ; his faith in the power of Him who setteth fast the mountains—a power which can evoke good out of evil, call the morning out of the bosom of the night, and reduce the strong passions of men to a calm like that of yonder lake—multiplied its strength ; and Scotland waits the return of the man who shall roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, that the glorious evangel may go abroad on its beneficent mission.



JOHN KNOX: LATER WORK IN SCOTLAND.



*"Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken?"*

NEH. 13 : 11.

*"Scotland heard him with the marrow of her bones."*

CARLISLE.

*"It is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the persons and good name of all their people, in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered, either upon pretence of religion or infidelity, to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever: and to take order, that all religious and ecclesiastical assemblies be held without molestation or disturbance."*

CON. FAITH, CHAP. XXIII. SEC. iii.

## JOHN KNOX: LATER WORK IN SCOTLAND.

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WE have traced the history of the Reformation in Scotland from its beginning to the time of John Knox's banishment to the Continent after the accession of Bloody Mary to the English throne. We shall now review his later work in his own country.

To roll back the clouds which overhung Scotland and let the cheerful, life-giving light of heaven down; to lift a galling yoke from the necks of a people than whom, in all the elements of intellectual strength and moral courage when directed by the truth, there was not a nobler people under the sun; to make known the evangel to sin-oppressed, careworn and eternity-bound souls, and so point the way to holiness, hope and heaven,—this was the mission of John Knox and his collaborators.

This Reformer, now in Switzerland, learning that it was possible for him—as a result, perhaps, of friendly mediation—to return to his native country, made ready for his journey thither.

Five years had elapsed since he was exiled from England, yet in the mean time he had made a hasty visit to Scotland. For two years he ministered to the English congregation in Geneva. Here he had dwelt in peace, happy in the companionship of his beloved wife and in the birth of two sons. Had he consulted

personal and domestic comfort, he would have tarried in that peaceful retreat, but the Master called him back to a life of hard service crowded with dangers, and he was prompt to obey.

He bade farewell to Calvin for the last time. He turned quickly yet sadly away from the beautiful Geneva, then hastened to the land of his birth and to the Kirk, weak and frightened, which longed for his coming. Denied a passage through England, he sailed directly from Dieppe to Leith, Scotland, and arrived at a most critical period.

The queen regent, who had seemed to oscillate between papacy and the Reformation, at heart an enemy of the latter, came boldly out in opposition to it, and declared that the leaders of the Reformation "should be banished from Scotland, although they preached as truly as ever Paul did." The Protestant ministers were summoned to appear at Stirling for immediate trial. Knox rested but a day at Edinburgh, then hastened to Dundee, and thence, in company with the principal adherents to the evangelical religion, journeyed toward Stirling. Arrived at Perth, the regent directed their journey to be arrested. She feared Knox and the "Congregation," as the Protestants were then called, and professed to have concluded upon a conciliatory policy. But the day of trial having come, the accused parties were "outlawed for not appearing," and the power of the realm was evoked for their destruction.

Tidings of this disgraceful procedure reached Perth just as Knox had concluded a sermon on "the idolatry of the mass and image-worship." The people were quietly and sadly dispersing when a Romish priest, to

show his contempt of the preacher and his doctrine, uncovered an altar which had been prepared for the occasion and made ready to celebrate the mass. The rougher portion of the congregation and others who sympathized with them, yielding to sudden passion, destroyed the altar and its images, trampling upon the fragments, and then, swept on by their wrath, assailed the monasteries of the town and utterly overthrew them.

This riotous proceeding, though severely condemned by Knox and the chief leaders of the Protestants, brought great injury to the Reformation. It aroused the fury of the papists, and for a time a disastrous war seemed inevitable. But this was averted through the influence of the duke of Argyle and the prior of St. Andrews, who were at the same time friends of the Reformation and supporters of the regent.

It was then determined by the Protestants to repair to St. Andrews, where the adherents of the Reformation were in the ascendancy, and establish Protestant worship in that place. As they approached the old town and saw the spire of the cathedral lifted above the trees, John Knox's prophecy when a prisoner on the French galleys, that he would live to preach the gospel of Christ in the parish church, was at once recalled.

The archbishop of St. Andrews, hearing that Knox proposed to preach in the cathedral, collected a number of armed men, and notified him that if he attempted to address the people he would do it at the peril of his life. The Reformer was urged by the noblemen to preserve silence. But he believed that to yield to this opposition would be to endanger the Reformation. It would be a confession of weakness and a submission to unrighteous

authority. It was now a question of life and death, not of one man, but of the Reformed Church.

Persuaded of this, Knox announced that he would preach on the following day. To his enemies he said, "I call God to witness that I never preached in contempt of any man nor with the design of hurting any earthly creature, but to delay to preach on the morrow, unless forcibly hindered, I cannot agree." To his friends he said, "As for the fear of danger that may come to me, let no man be solicitous, for my life is in the custody of Him whose glory I seek. I desire the hand or weapon of no man to defend me. I only crave audience, which if it be denied me here at this time, I must seek where I may have it."

These were manly words. They declare a moral courage and faith in God which lift John Knox far above the ordinary grade of human life. Gleaming swords and the red hand of a violent archbishop uplifted to smite him fail to intimidate the great Reformer. He stands in his purpose immovable as Ben Lomond, which from a serene heaven looks down on the inferior hills.

The day comes. The sun struggles through the mists which overhang the town. The attention of the people is turned now toward the castle, where the soldiery wait the command of the archbishop to do their work of death, and again to the parish church, toward which a multitude are quietly wending their way. The hour of service is come. John Knox passes fearlessly down the street, enters the church, ascends the pulpit, before him a sea of human faces, around him a company of guardian angels, the rustling of invisible wings almost heard

as in the breathless silence of the people he rises in his place.

He discoursed on the casting out of the profane traffickers from the temple of Jerusalem, and was thus led to speak of the corruptions that had been introduced into the Church under the papacy. He pronounced the removal of these a duty, and repeated this opinion on several consecutive days, during which he preached with great earnestness to large assemblies. The result was the establishment of the Reformed worship in St. Andrews, the removal of all images and pictures from the church, and the utter demolition of the monasteries which had corrupted and disgraced the town.

Knox has been condemned for this destruction of buildings which art had beautified, though they were consecrated to superstition. There is a species of idolatry which substitutes the æsthetics of religion for its divine power. Representations of Christ, the Virgin Mary and the saints, whether in wood or stone or cast upon the canvas, intercept a spiritual view of the only true object of worship; and great cathedrals with naves and transepts and choir and high arches, and, surmounting all, quaint and massive towers climbing heavenward, may under the tuition of Rome receive the homage which is due to Him whose temple is the universe, and who will not suffer his glory to be transferred to the works of men's hands.

It is unquestionably true that the worship of the Romish Church at this period was almost exclusively idolatrous. At the same time, great cathedrals and the grim old monasteries which had witnessed the passing away of generations were among the chief supports of the

papacy. St. Peter's, St. Paul's and the Lateran church of Rome at the present day sustain this relation to modern popery, and many are determined to a false religion by the grandeur of its temples.

Knox instructed the people that "the best way to keep the rooks from returning was to pull down their nests;" and they acted upon the hint. And not only was this work speedily accomplished in St. Andrews, but also in Stirling, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Linlithgow and the leading cities of the kingdom. The times demanded extreme measures. We must not judge the Reformers of that age by the rules which obtain in this. We believe that God raised them up for an unusual yet needful work, and they did it. The results justify the wisdom of their course.

A few months later John Knox set out on an extended tour through Scotland. He preached at Kelso, Jedburgh, Ayr, Stirling, Perth, Montrose and Dundee. His brave denunciation of corruption, accompanied by fervid portrayals of the fullness of the glorious gospel, stirred the souls of all who heard him. As Carlyle has said, "The Scotch people heard him with the marrow of their bones." The yoke which Rome imposed was cast off. The truth shone into minds long darkened by superstition, and gladder Te Deums were raised in open fields and sheltered glens than had ever been sung in the great cathedrals of Glasgow or Stirling. The people were released from the domination of a corrupt priesthood. They had found Christ. They had planted their feet on the King's highway of holiness, and they were going heavenward with palms in their hands and crowns on their heads. How great the



change already wrought! It was life from the dead. "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

On the 24th of August, 1560, the Scottish Parliament terminated by a solemn act the papal jurisdiction and all authority flowing therefrom. But it substituted nothing. It simply left the Church at liberty to legislate for itself. There is here no union of Church and State. Christ's kingdom is not of this world. The only recognized Head of the Reformed Church of Scotland was the Lord himself, and to his commands his loyal subjects were ready to bow.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland met for the first time on the 20th of the following December (1560). A confession of faith had already been adopted. The Assembly addressed itself to the preparation of a complete system of ecclesiastical government. "They took not their example," says Row, "from any Church in the world; no, not from Geneva." They drew their plans—so they believed—from the word of God. It was Presbyterianism. They insisted it could not well be anything else. It was the synagogue of the New Testament Church. It was the Presbyterianism which had lived through all the Dark Ages, preserved by the Waldenses in the mountain retreats of Northern Italy, a people who refused to be called Protestants, since they had never formed any part of the Romish Church. They alone were the lineal descendants of the apostolic Church. Papacy had apostatized from the truth.

The ordinary permanent officers of the Scottish Church were three—the minister or pastor; the ruling

elder, who assisted the minister in the exercise of church discipline ; and the deacon, who had charge of the revenues of the church and the care of the poor.

A board of trustees was unknown. As the number of ministers was inadequate for the supply of all the churches, persons of known piety were selected to read the Scriptures and conduct the devotional exercises on the Sabbath. If these made sufficient advance in knowledge and were competent to teach, they were, after due examination, appointed exhorters. The great needs of our day suggest the revival of this scriptural custom. There were also ministers who were commissioned to take the oversight of large districts. They were itinerant preachers and had the care of vacant churches; hence the name of superintendents by which they were usually known. This arrangement was suggested by the exigencies of the times.

The Church held to the parity of the ministry. The office of bishop, in the papal or episcopal sense, was not recognized as of divine authority. The dogma of apostolic succession was repudiated as unscriptural. Besides, what Scotchman would consent to receive ordination at the hands of a Romish bishop, or trace his ministerial descent from the apostles through the corrupt Church out of which he had just come? His ordination must conform to that of Timothy's, and by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery he is set apart to his sacred office.

On the Lord's Day the people assembled twice for public worship. The second service was held in the afternoon, and catechising was substituted for preaching. There was also a weekly meeting for the expounding of

the Scriptures and for other religious exercises. The Lord's Supper was administered four times a year, and the ordinance of baptism, always accompanied by preaching or other religious service, was administered as circumstances required. This was more than three hundred years ago.

Provision was further made for the education of the young. Schools were established as far as practicable in every parish, and in connection with grammar and Latin the principles of the Christian religion were taught. The question of the Bible in the school was not mooted in those days. These Scotch Presbyterians believed that any education was singularly incomplete which did not embrace moral as well as intellectual culture, and they were careful as to the intelligence and piety of those who had charge of their children in the most interesting and the most important, because the formative, period of life.

Eight months after the first meeting of the General Assembly of the Scottish Church, when the Reformation was fully launched on the quiet waters—a season of calm after a long tempestuous period—Mary, the queen of the Scots, whose husband, King Francis II. of France, was then deceased, returned to Scotland. This occurred Aug. 19, 1561. Mary was then in the nineteenth year of her age. Her great personal beauty, winning address and native genius, joined with the accomplishments acquired in the schools and in the fashionable society of France, were such as to attract even the rugged Scots. They were proud of their beautiful queen, and to this day, although there rests upon her memory a cloud that may never be lifted, the Scotch people speak tenderly of Mary Stuart, hoping against hope that at some time and

in some way the overhanging cloud may yet divide and let down a little of heaven's light on her royal tomb in the old Westminster Abbey.

Mary's return to Scotland was greeted with many demonstrations of joy. All Edinburgh was alive with enthusiasm. High street was brilliant with banners, and from the windows of the quaint old houses bonny lassies waved their welcome as the royal pageant passed by on its way to the palace.

But there were some who did not share in this joy. They saw a little cloud on the horizon which they feared might grow and darken the sky. They had just been delivered from the bondage of the papal hierarchy, and thought they saw a prosperous, happy Church reaching down the long perspective of years.

Mary was a devout Romanist. She at once erected an altar in her chapel and the mass was said by a Romish priest. This was the little cloud, and, although the sky was clear, yet there were heard in the distance the mutterings of an approaching storm. A stern voice with a clarion ring that awakened Scotland to apprehensions of danger was heard: "Shall we suffer that idol (popery) to be erected within this realm?" It was declared that "one mass was more terrible than ten thousand armed men landed to invade the kingdom." Prayers were offered in the churches that God would deliver the queen from papal superstition and bring her into sympathy with the Reformed religion; or, if that great blessing were denied, that Scotland might at any cost maintain the pure evangel.

Mary was quick to recognize the powerful influence of Knox. The restoration of the papacy could not be

accomplished unless his power was broken. Perhaps she can at least silence his opposition to her religion. May she not even now, by flattery, restore him to the bosom of the Church, and so settle all questions concerning its re-establishment in Scotland? As soon think to move Arthur's Seat from its place or reverse the course of the Clyde by a mermaid's song. Mary made the trial. She had been in Edinburgh but a few days when she sent for the Reformer, and held an extended interview with him in the presence of her brother, the prior of St. Andrews. The deportment of Knox on this occasion has been misrepresented. Hume evinces his hostility to evangelical religion by apologizing for Mary and condemning Knox, declaring the truth concerning neither. John Knox was not guilty of any contempt of authority or discourtesy to a woman in expressing his views on the great questions of the day, and especially when he was ostensibly summoned into the presence of his queen to do this very thing. In the course of this interview she charged him with having taught the people to adopt a religion different from that which was approved by their princes. To this he replied that true religion derived its authority from God; that princes were often most ignorant on this point; that subjects were not bound to frame their religious sentiments and practices according to the arbitrary will of their rulers, else the Hebrews ought to have conformed to the religion of Pharaoh, Daniel and his associates to that of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, and the primitive Christians to that of the Roman emperors. "Yea," replied the queen, "but none of these men raised the sword against their princes. Think you," she con-

tinued, "that subjects, having the power, may resist their princes?" He answered, "If princes exceed their bound, madam, no doubt they may be resisted, even by power. For no greater honor or greater obedience is to be given to kings and princes than God has commanded to be given to father and mother. But the father may be struck with a frenzy in which he would slay his children. Now, madam, if the children arise, join together, apprehend the father, take the sword from him, bind his hands and keep him in prison until the frenzy be over, think you, madam, that the children do any wrong? Even so, madam, it is with princes that would murder the children of God that are subject unto them. Their blind zeal is nothing but a mad frenzy; therefore to take the sword from them, to bind their hands and to cast them into prison till they be brought to a more sober mind is no disobedience against princes, but just obedience, because it agreeth with the will of God."

After a brief silence the queen replied with deep emotion, "Well, then, I perceive that my subjects should obey you and not me, and will do what they please, and not what I command, and so must I be subject to them and not they to me."—"God forbid," replied Knox, "that ever I take upon me to command any one to obey me or to set subjects at liberty to do whatever pleases them! But my concern is that both princes and subjects may obey God. And this subjection, madam, to God and his Church is the greatest dignity that flesh can get upon the face of the earth, for it shall raise them to everlasting glory."—"But you are not the Church that I will nourish," said the queen; "I will defend the



Church of Rome, for it is, I think, the true Church of God.”—“Your will, madam,” replied the Reformer, “is no reason, neither doth your thought make the Roman harlot to be the true and immaculate spouse of Jesus Christ. Wonder not, madam, that I call Rome an harlot, for that Church is altogether polluted with all kinds of spiritual fornication, both in doctrine and manners.”

This was unquestionably plain talk. The Reformer's trumpet gave no uncertain sound. Some are of the opinion that on this occasion it blew too strong a blast—that if he was made of such stuff that he could not help speaking his real sentiments, he should have done it in milder and more courteous terms. We confess we cannot see the absence of courtesy or of respect to authority in our Reformer's address. It is to be remembered that the spiritual interests of a realm were at stake, and the civil liberties of Scotland as well.

John Knox had an intelligent understanding of the case, and “was more kingly than all the race of the Stuarts.” He had traveled heights and explored depths the young queen had never seen, and he brought back faithful report of dangers to be shunned, and uttered convictions of duty which subsequent history has shown to be founded on eternal truth. As a true man, as a patriot, as a friend of his sovereign, he could not have said less; and as for the tone of his address, though intensely earnest, it was as respectful as it was firm. Had he been a temporizer, as was Erasmus, or as pacific as Melanchthon, the Reformation would have been strangled in its cradle, and Scotland would have reverted to barbarism and the cruel domination of Rome. The times



required a brave man and true—one who could speak his Heaven-inspired convictions even with a sword at his throat; and God, who sent Nathan to reprove King David and Elijah to condemn the wicked Ahab in the vineyard, commissioned John Knox to utter in the audience-hall of Holyrood Palace the principles of everlasting truth, the only sure foundation of domestic peace, of beneficent rule and of human salvation.

The interview being brought to a close, Knox passed quietly out with the expression of a wish that was sincere and kind: "I pray God, madam, that you may be as blessed within the commonwealth of Scotland as ever Deborah was in the commonwealth of Israel."

At this time Knox preached in St. Giles's church in Edinburgh, and frequently addressed three thousand people. His sermons were not models of rhetoric, but, like himself, sharp and rugged, and so direct that all knew at what he aimed. He loved Scotland. The wounds he inflicted, being those of a friend, were better than the kisses of an enemy.

One day intelligence was brought to Edinburgh that the duke of Guise had made an attack on a Protestant congregation in France whilst assembled for worship, and had murdered many of the defenceless people. Queen Mary received the news with evident satisfaction. The night following Holyrood was brilliant with lights and crowded with courtiers and friends of the queen. Music and dancing were continued until the dawn—a fitting celebration of an event which had brought sorrow to the homes of many French Protestants.

St. Giles's church witnessed a different scene when the great preacher referred to the massacre in terms of sad-

ness that moved many to tears, and in denunciations of the act which provoked to righteous displeasure. False reports of this discourse were carried to the queen, and the Reformer was again summoned into her presence. She charged him with having spoken disrespectfully of the court, and of herself in a manner calculated to awaken sentiments of contempt for their sovereign in the minds of her people. The preacher said there were persons then present who had heard the sermon, and he would repeat the substance of it, leaving them to certify, if they were truthful persons, to the faithfulness of his repetition. He admitted he had said that some princes were more exercised in music and dancing than in reading or in hearing the word of God, and delighted more in fiddlers and flatterers than in the company of wise and grave men who were capable of giving them wholesome counsel. But of charges of irreverence for Her Majesty, such as she had just repeated, he denied them, intimating, perhaps somewhat sarcastically, that people who habitually absented themselves from church should be slow to give credence to the reports they heard of the utterances of the preachers. The queen dismissed him with the remark that his sermon had been misrepresented. And as the ground of the complaint was proved to be false, her disappointment was as great as his satisfaction was complete.

Their third interview was at Lochleven, in which Mary resorted to ingenious artifice to accomplish her designs against the Reformation, but failed in her endeavors.

They met for the fourth and last time at Holyrood. As Knox entered she burst into tears, saying that never had a

prince been handled as she had been, and added, "I vow to God I shall be at once revenged." He had objected to her marriage with a Roman Catholic. She inquired, "What have you to do with my marriage? What are you in this commonwealth?" He calmly stated the grounds of his objection to an alliance with a devotee of Rome. She continued weeping, and he said he never took delight in the distress of any creature; it was with difficulty he could see his own boys weep when he corrected them for their faults, and far less could he rejoice in Her Majesty's tears; but, seeing he had given her no just reason for offence and had only discharged his duty, he was constrained, though unwillingly, to sustain her tears rather than hurt his conscience or betray the commonwealth by his silence.

Subsequently he was charged with treason and tried in open convention, at which Mary presided. She hoped to crush him at last, and urged the prosecution with great violence. The Reformer's defence was clear and satisfactory to the majority of the court, who voted for his honorable acquittal and commended him for his amiable demeanor on the occasion. Even the bishop of Ross, who had been the queen's informant, deserted her in the trial, and admitted that, having heard the case, he saw nothing in Knox that was blameworthy.

Thus the queen was foiled in her attempt to overcome the Reformer. He was invincible as the truth itself, and firm as the rock which supported the old castle beyond the Lawn Market, which had defied a thousand storms and was prepared to defy a thousand more. The progress of the Reformed Church was slow and attended with great difficulties. Opposed at every step

by all the power of the throne and by the intrigues of the lords who adhered to the Romish faith, it seemed that only the unconquerable will and potential influence of Knox prevented a return to the papacy. And it was so.

For having delivered a sermon which gave offence to Darnley, he was commanded by the privy council to desist from preaching whilst the king and Mary sojourned in Edinburgh. In the offensive sermon he had said that God punished wicked Ahab because he did not restrain his idolatrous wife Jezebel. Darnley supposed the remark was designed for him. It may have been; it may not. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth." But the prohibition was of short continuance. Mary and her husband returned to Stirling, one of her places of residence, and Knox went on in his work.

After a time Darnley professed himself a papist. There followed similar professions by such leading men of the realm as the earls of Lenox, Cassiles and Caithness, together with Lords Montgomery and Seton. The queen was now encouraged to renew her effort to restore the papacy. In February, 1566, Cardinal Lorraine communicated with Mary, and sent a copy of the League for the extirpation of the Protestants and for severe procedures against certain offensive lords, by which it was hoped to restore Scotland to the Romish see. Mary affixed her signature to the League and matured her plans for securing a papal triumph.

There was a person of inferior character attached to the household of the queen who had urged this movement against the Protestants with all the zeal of a devout Romanist, intensified by his affection for Mary—an un-

lawful attachment which was reciprocated by her. He was believed to be an Italian adventurer whose personal accomplishments had commended him to the consideration of the queen. He was more probably a disguised legate of the papal Church, sent hither to protect the interests of Rome. Mary made him her private secretary, and gave him the affection which only a husband should receive. His name is familiar to all readers of history—David Rizzio. One evening, whilst the queen, Rizzio and a few of Mary's friends were sitting in what was called the supping-room, a small apartment in Holyrood House, muffled steps were heard on the secret stairway leading to this room. A moment later and Lord Darnley, pale and trembling, entered, followed by armed men, who seized the Italian and slew him, regardless of all the entreaties of the queen to spare his life. Mary dried her tears and said, "Now I will study revenge."

The murder of her paramour, instigated by Darnley, diverted the attention of Mary from her designs against the Reformed Church. She was occupied with but one idea, the avenging of Rizzio's death. The unprincipled earl of Bothwell was ready to become her agent. Darnley was enticed to an isolated dwelling in Edinburgh, and on the night of the 10th of February, 1569, was murdered, the house in which he was lying being blown up by gunpowder. Mary had found her revenge. Shortly afterward she was married to Bothwell.

Before the bar of public opinion if not at the tribunal of God she is pronounced a murderer and an adulteress. We cannot adopt this severe judgment. Thereafter—her hands, as many believe, covered with blood—

she is more unhappy than ever before. Her energy of character deserts her. Her guilt haunts her. Avengers seem ever on her track. Her power over her former friends is broken. Scotland will no longer come at her beck. Armies will no longer fight for the beautiful but wicked queen. Bothwell is hated and flees for his life. Mary is a prisoner in Lochleven Castle, makes her escape, aided by the Hamiltons and their allies, attempts to hew her way back to the throne, is defeated, exiled to England, there imprisoned, and after long confinement is beheaded.

Thus closed the sad life of Mary Stuart, who might have been one of the most beloved of sovereigns. Had she possessed moral excellence equal to her personal beauty and her cultivated genius, she would have outshone her rival, Queen Elizabeth, and erected in the hearts of the Scotch people a memorial to her name which would have been cherished by all succeeding generations. But she had little integrity of character. Her education in the voluptuous court of France and in the pale of a corrupt Church, which made little distinction between virtue and vice, had disqualified her for personal government and the exercise of regal authority. In all history there are few sadder chapters than those which record the life and death of Mary, beautiful Mary, queen of the Scots.

Under the regency of the earl of Murray the kingdom had comparative peace. On the 15th of December, 1567, the Scottish Parliament confirmed the action of 1560 in favor of the Protestant religion. For three years the growth of Protestantism was rapid. It took deep root and extended its branches.



Then John Knox, worn with labor, depressed by disease and in the course of nature approaching the end of life, thought to lay off his armor and compose himself for a change of worlds. But suddenly, with all Scotland, he was startled by the intelligence of the good regent's death. While passing through a narrow street in Linlithgow, Murray was shot and mortally wounded by a concealed assassin, the ingrate Hamilton, son of the archbishop of St. Andrews, whose life, after the battle of Langside, the regent himself had spared. In a few hours Murray, the wise ruler, the earnest Christian, the friend of the Reformation, a man of rare beauty of character, was dead. Scotland mourned his death. John Knox was almost crushed by the blow which smote down the beloved regent. Ever memorable is the sermon he preached over the remains of Murray and the prayer he offered on the sad funeral day.

Shortly after this Knox was stricken with paralysis, and his public life seemed at an end. But he recovered sufficiently to conduct an occasional service. When the interests of the Church were especially imperiled he forgot the weakness of the flesh and rallied the wavering Protestants to the strife with all the vigor of former days.

Now the papists have grown weary of his resistance to their wicked designs, and again they seek his life. One evening as he takes his accustomed seat at his table he feels impelled to change his place. A moment later a musket-ball passes through the window over his vacant chair; it is deflected from its course and deeply imbedded in the ceiling. The appointed bound is not yet reached, and Knox is immortal until he reaches it.



Yielding to the solicitations of friends, he removed to St. Andrews. Here he continued his work. Numerous controversies engaged his attention. The machinations of the papacy were resisted. Messages of counsel and encouragement were sent to the churches. On the Lord's Day the great Reformer occupied the pulpit of the parish church, the old pulpit in which he began his ministry and had uttered brave words for Christ which had rung out over all Scotland.

James Melville, a student of St. Andrews, describes the preacher in his last days: "I attended him with my note-book and pen. In the opening up of his text he was moderate for the space of half an hour, but when he came to the application he made me so thrill and tremble I could not hold a pen to write. He was very weak. I saw him every day go slowly and wearily, with a ruff about his neck, a staff in one hand, and good godly Richard Ballenden holding up the other, from the abbey to the parish kirk; and the said Richard Ballenden and another servant lifted him up to the pulpit, where he behoved to lean at his first entrance, but ere he had done with his sermon he was so active and vigorous that he was likely to beat the pulpit in pieces and fly out of it."

In St. Andrews, Knox lived on intimate terms with the professors of St. Leonard's College. One of his favorite recreations was to walk through the college grounds, looking with a paternal interest upon the students, frequently gathering a little group of them around him, imparting to them wise and affectionate counsels and then giving them his blessing. The students were much affected by these interviews with the

venerable man, and carried the memory of them through all their after years.

The weary soldier, laboring as strength would permit, in this classic town, often longed to go away and be at rest. Thus he wrote in the preface to one of his works : "I heartily salute and take my good-night of all the faithful of both realms, earnestly desiring the assistance of their prayers, that without any notable slander to the evangel of Jesus Christ I may end my battle, for, as the world is weary of me, so am I of it." But again he is summoned to Edinburgh : his friends desire to hear his voice once more before he dies. He goes on the condition that he should not be required to keep silence respecting the conduct of those who kept the castle, "whose treasonable and tyrannical deeds he would cry out against as long as he was able to speak."

In the latter part of that summer there came to Edinburgh news of the great massacre of Protestants in Paris. Charles IX. had ordered the murder of the pious Coligni, admiral of France, and this was followed by the indiscriminate destruction of the friends of the Reformation, not only in Paris, but in all parts of the kingdom. Men and women, old and young, and little children were put to death. Seventy thousand were butchered by the myrmidons of Rome in the short space of one week. By direction of the pope a season of thanksgiving was observed, and the faithful lifted their bloodstained hands to heaven in services which were an abomination to God.

The Reformed Church on the Continent was bowed down under this great affliction. Scotland was overwhelmed with sorrow. John Knox was sorely distressed,

but his faith in God and in the success of the Reformation did not fail him. He asked that he might be carried to the pulpit of old St. Giles's church, and there he forgot his physical pains in the expression of his holy wrath. The wavering grew firm. The discouraged became hopeful. The voice of the people was as one man: "Come what may, we will hold fast to the holy evangel." —

A little later Lawson of St. Andrews was chosen Knox's colleague and successor in the pastorate at Edinburgh. The installation services were held Nov. 9, 1572. The sermon was preached by John Knox in Tolbooth church, and the services were concluded in the larger auditorium of St. Giles's. His charges to the pastor and people were marked by great pathos. The message seemed to come from one who had already passed within the veil. It was a peaceful yet sad occasion. With an exhausted voice Knox pronounced the benediction on his loved people with a tenderness that was deeply affecting. His life-work was done. Leaning on his staff and supported by an attendant, he walked from St. Giles's church down High street to his home, and never came out of it until he was borne to his grave. On the following Sabbath his elders and deacons and David Lindsay, a minister from Leith, met in Knox's room. The dying Reformer addressed them in impressive words. "The day approaches," he said, "and is now before the door, for which I have frequently thirsted, when I shall be released from my great labors and innumerable sorrows, and shall be with Christ. And now God is my witness, whom I have served in the Spirit in the gospel of his Son, that I have taught nothing but

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the true and solid doctrine of the gospel of the Son of God, and have had it for my only object to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the weak, the fearful and the distressed by the promises of grace, and to fight against the proud and rebellious by the divine threatenings. I know that many have frequently complained, and do still complain, of my too great severity; but God knows that my mind was always void of hatred to the persons of those against whom I thundered the severest judgments."

Other words of the same import he spoke, and then added, addressing the elders and then his successor: "My dear brethren, do you persevere in the eternal truth of the gospel; wait diligently on the flock over which the Lord hath set you, and which he redeemed with the blood of his only-begotten Son.—And thou, my dearest brother Lawson, fight the good fight and do the work of the Lord joyfully and resolutely. The Lord from on high bless you and the whole church of Edinburgh, against whom, so long as they persevere in the word of truth which they have heard of me, the gates of hell shall not prevail." That little room on the Netherbow was a place of weeping. Only John Knox was calm. His dim eyes were turned toward heaven whence his Lord should come, and above the dome of dear St. Giles's, which he saw from his window, there stood the gate of pearl, opened now that he might enter.

The next Friday he was much engaged in meditation and prayer, and was heard to say, "Come, Lord Jesus. Sweet Jesus, into thy hand I commend my spirit. Be merciful, Lord, to thy Church which thou hast re-

deemed. Give peace to this afflicted commonwealth." Many friends visited him, among whom were Lord Lindsay, the bishop of Caithness, the earl of Glencairn and Lord Ruthven. At his request his wife frequently read to him from God's holy word, and he dwelt with especial delight on the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians and the Lord's intercessory prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel, in which he "first cast anchor."

On Monday, the 24th of November, he failed rapidly, and yet at nine o'clock he rose, sat a while in his chair, and then, too weak to sit, reclined on his bed. A friend asked him if he had any pain. He answered cheerfully, "It is no painful pain, but such a pain as shall soon, I trust, end the battle." Again he said, "Within a short time I shall, without any great pain of body or anguish of mind, exchange this mortal and miserable life for a blessed immortality through Jesus Christ." About eleven o'clock he said, "Now it is come." Bannytyne, his secretary, requested him to think on the comforting promises of the Saviour Jesus Christ. Being speechless, he could make no reply. Then Bannytyne asked that he would give some sign that he died in peace. The pale hand went up, and almost the next moment, without a struggle, the great Reformer died, in the sixty-seventh year of his age.

Severely persecuted for righteousness' sake, often exiled from his loved Scotland, frequently hunted by the bloodthirsty papists as if he were a wild beast of the forest, and compelled to maintain an almost perpetual warfare in behalf of the truth, leading on to battle and victory, he joyfully went to his everlasting rest. The

sun of mortal life had set, but it shone on another world. Without him Scotland might have remained under the power of Rome and have been in our age what Italy, Spain, and Southern Ireland continue to be. Without him this land we call ours would not have enjoyed so long the blessings of religious liberty and civil freedom.

Well did Thomas Carlyle say "that for her liberty Scotland owed more to John Knox than to all other men." His influence was far more potent than that of Robert Bruce, of David II. or of Henry VIII.

Luther, Calvin, Knox, glorious trio! They were the Paul, Peter and John of the Reformed Church. Their names shall live until the end of time, and be inscribed in letters of gold in the archives of heaven. On Wednesday, November 26, 1572, John Knox was buried in the churchyard of St. Giles's. A multitude of people witnessed his burial. Loving and grateful hands laid him in his grave, and Regent Morton, looking into that lowly resting-place, exclaimed in words immortal as their subject, "There lies he who never feared the face of man—who, though often threatened with dag and dagger, hath ended his days in peace."

Now in the stone-paved street, over which day by day carriages roll and a jostling multitude pass, behind St. Giles's church, may be seen a stone, level with the street, bearing two initials and a date, supposed to indicate, if not the spot, the vicinity, in which the great man was interred. Just where he lies none can certainly tell. The same may be said of Calvin. Both in this respect were like their Lord, whose sepulchre has been hidden from all the succeeding ages. The



great of this world leave behind them monuments more enduring than sculptured marble. They live in the lives of each generation that follows. They are not dead, but rather are like the stars, which, unseen by day, hold on their course, riding in glory through the sky.

We must leave our readers to draw their own lessons from this remarkable life and to learn the features of the Reformer's character from the narrative we have given. Only this shall we say: He was one of the bravest men that ever lived, and yet, whilst he wore a martial cloak, and could not have done otherwise, there beat beneath it a heart that was ever loving and kind, that harbored no revenge and was ever ready to forgive—a heart that clung to Christ and his blessed gospel as the ivy to the oak, and loved all who bore the image of our Lord. Froude represents the Reformer as a man of kindly spirit, who sketched the popular feeling in a series of scenes shining with laughter and humorous defiance, but so free from bitterness that even anger seems to melt into contemptuous pity. "They go far wrong," says Carlyle, "who think that Knox was a gloomy, shrieking fanatic. Not at all. He was one of the solidest of men. Practical, cautious, hopeful, patient; a most shrewd, observing, quickly-discerning man; brother to the high, brother also to the low; sincere in his sympathy with both." A man of great intellectual power, of far-reaching mental vision, of rare attainments in the learning of the schools, he was mighty in the Scriptures and prevalent in prayer. "I know not," said Smeton, "if ever so much piety and genius were lodged in so frail and weak a body." When human



helps failed him he took hold on God with a firmer grasp, and the solemn night did often catch up his intercession and bear it away to the throne: "Give me Scotland or I die."

God bless Scotland, the Northland, surrounded by the Orkneys, the Hebrides and Barra Isles as Saturn by his resplendent rings; the land of Knox and Murray, of the Erskines and John Blair, of Rutherford and Halyburton and Anderson, of McCheyne and Chalmers, of Norman McLeod and William Arnot, of Candlish and Thomas Guthrie—grand and mighty men, of whom and others like to them the silver-tongued Everett said that they "had acquired over the minds of men a supremacy more extensive and more enduring than that of Alexander or Augustus!"

— Here we close our account of the great Reformation. The path over which we have traveled has often been red with blood. The grasp of popery is strong as death. Its walls are fire. Its weapons are carnal. Its spirit, like its principles, remains unchanged. It would repeat the Inquisition if it could; it would establish papal supremacy on our free soil if it had the power. Even now it is the controlling element in nearly all our large cities. It strives for universal pre-eminence, and, unless the friends of civil and religious liberty take the alarm, will rule the decisions of our courts, control our State and national legislation and fill the highest offices of the nation.

And what then? It needs no prophetic inspiration to answer. God preserve us from threatening evil! By every consideration of humanity, patriotism and piety

may we be impelled to stand by the principles of the holy evangel, long withheld from the world by the corrupt hierarchy which chose for its seat the city of the Cæsars; to restore which God raised up such men as Luther, Calvin and Knox; to maintain which Patrick Hamilton, George Wishart, Thomas Cranmer, Hugh Latimer, Nicholas Ridley and an army of holy martyrs shed their blood. God grant that the kingdom of Christ, whose emblems are righteousness and peace, may everywhere prevail! That day will surely come, though whether, on account of our supineness and sins, there shall lie between a reign such as Bloody Mary's and such scenes as were enacted at St. Andrews, at Smithfield and on the Oxford common, only God, who sees the end and traces all the steps thereto, can certainly tell.



ROMANISM: ITS PRESENT STATUS.

*“ Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming : even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish ; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.”*

2 THESS. 2 : 8-11.

*“ In the second petition, which is, Thy kingdom come, we pray, that Satan’s kingdom may be destroyed, and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it, and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.”*

SHORTER CATECHISM, Ans. to Question 102.

*“ Christ. . . shall come again at the last day in great power, and in the full manifestation of his own glory, and of the Father’s, with all his holy angels, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God, to judge the world in righteousness.”*

LARGER CATECHISM, Ans. to Question 56.

## ROMANISM: ITS PRESENT STATUS.

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IN the preceding sketches we have been occupied with the past. We have contemplated the moral darkness which during the Middle Ages gathered over Europe—the simplicity of the gospel a memory only, piety in its decadence, the Church divested of nearly every trace of her early beauty; ignorance, superstition, wickedness and every form of corruption in high places and in low casting heavy shadows over the land and on all the prospects of the future. Then we saw the light arise amid the darkness, a lone star on the horizon that betokened an approaching morning and beyond that a better day. We have followed on through ages of fear, conflict and toil, during which hope struggled with despair, the glare of martyr-fires on the faces of the timid and strong, the Church arising at last out of the ashes of persecution a goodly temple, its foundations deeply laid, its peaceful dome reflecting heaven and its spacious walls enclosing a multitude of the redeemed. Souls born from above communed with Christ and one another, rejoiced in the truth released from the cerements of death, and, endued with power from on high, girded themselves for the world's conquest to their glorious King.

Now we look about us in this more favored age that

we may learn the present condition of Romanism in the lands where it still holds a place. We shall also notice its claim to universal recognition in these latter times as based upon its history, which reaches back, as we are told, to apostolic times, and was born by the authoritative word of Him who liveth and abideth for ever.

The Church of Rome is less corrupt than once it was. It is not the persecuting power it was in the sixteenth century. It does not maintain its ancient control over the governments of the world, nor command the reverence it inspired when the Gregories and Clements filled the pontifical throne and such princes as Charles V. and Philip II. bowed on the steps of a doubly-crowned autocracy.

There is much in the Roman Catholic Church of to-day to admire. There are elements of good which it were folly to deny; agencies of blessing which have alleviated human woe; examples of piety which cannot be questioned; and possibilities of usefulness that under divine inspiration and control would lift the world into a higher orbit.

We are not forgetful of its great charities, the ministries of its Sisters of Mercy; its asylums for the suffering on both sides of the Atlantic; its monasteries, like those of the Great St. Bernard, the Simplon Pass, Bethlehem and Nazareth, in which the poor are temporarily sheltered and fed and where the weary traveler rests. Nor do we forget that its churches are open to the humblest classes, all social distinctions ignored before the altars of St. Peter's basilica and in the rude Alpine chapel. By means of its charitable institutions



and its recognition of the poor it has greatly extended its power throughout the world and furnished an example worthy of universal emulation.

We are also constrained to accord a qualified admiration to Rome's steadfastness of purpose, departing not from the early aspiration to "independent sovereignty, control over the princes of the earth and the supremacy of the Church." The Romanism of to-day, though shorn of its temporal power, seeks its recovery, and swerves not from the principles which by logical sequence demand its restoration. It secludes the Holy Father in the Vatican, a reputed prisoner in the most brilliant palace in all the earth, and calmly waits the fulfillment of its oft-repeated auguries. The waves of a holy indignation beat against the throne of its usurped dominion, the light of a pure evangelism glares on all the surrounding summits, and Protestantism pushes its conquests in lands that had sworn allegiance to Rome; but the papacy sits serenely on the Vatican mount, addresses the faithful of all lands from thence, urges its way along the paths of the world's progress, and from every mountain-height flings out the banner of its unwavering hope.

It is the marvel of the ages. Its inconsistency amounts to genius. "It is both lofty and degraded; simple, yet worldly-wise; humble, yet scornful and proud; washing beggars' feet, yet imposing commands on the potentates of earth; benignant, yet severe on all who rebel; here clothed in rags, and there reveling in palaces; supported by charities, yet feasting the princes of the earth; assuming the title of servant of the servants of God, yet arrogating to itself the highest seat among worldly dignitaries. Was there ever such a

contradiction?—glory in debasement, and debasement in glory, type of the misery and greatness of man? Was there ever such a mystery, so occult are its arts, so subtile its policy, so plausible its pretensions, so certain its shafts?” \*

Romanism has many apologists. A mistaken charity magnifies its virtues, ignores its vices and condones its crimes. Thus error is advanced, the unwary are misled and the devotees of a corrupt religion are confirmed in their superstitions. This charity is not the expression of that divine love which would save souls even by a holy violence.

Romanism boasts of its unity and catholicity. Its unity is specious only, and its catholicity unreal. It claims that before his ascension our Lord indicated the outward form of the Church and directed its organization with Peter as its head. On the day of Pentecost this external organism was completed. From that time onward Peter and his successors were to be recognized as the representatives of Christ, the real but absent Head of the visible Church. The spiritual supremacy of Christendom is thus, by divine appointment, vested in the pope. The Church universal is based on the principle of obedience to him, and a system of doctrine and an order of worship are maintained in harmony with this papal despotism and are its effective support.

Roman Catholicism holds that the unity of the Church in respect to its external organization and its doctrinal system has continued without interruption or variation to the present. Protestantism is pronounced a

\* Lord's Lecture on Hildebrand.

heresy, recent as the Reformation, and broken into variant divisions, lacking either outward or spiritual coherence, and as changeful as diverse. These assumptions of the unity of the papacy are groundless, and the alleged disagreements in Protestantism do not exist. ✓

First: The claim of Romanism to universal recognition, as based on the supremacy of the pope and the unbroken succession of the priesthood, cannot be maintained. History does not support it. Peter was an apostle. The apostolic office was personal, and therefore could not be communicated to another. It was necessary to the apostleship that he who held the office should be able to bear personal testimony to the resurrection of Christ—that he should be possessed of an infallible inspiration, be endowed with the power of working miracles and be able to impart spiritual gifts. These qualifications ceased with the Twelve. The office itself was temporary, and therefore there could be no succession. Peter and the other apostles ordained suitable men to the ministry, but did this not as apostles, but as co-ordinate presbyters. The idea of the supremacy of Peter never occurred to the apostles, and received no recognition from the early Church.

A celebrated Oxford professor, Henry Dodwell, expressed his opinion on the subject in somewhat drastic terms. He insisted that “the office of the apostles perished with the apostles; in which office there never was any succession to any of them, except to Judas the Traitor.”

Further: If the supremacy of Peter were true, yet the pontifical succession cannot be established. Peter stands alone in the supremacy claimed for him by the

Holy See. Ignatius and Polycarp speak of no successor. Down to the time of Irenæus, near the close of the second century, there is not the slightest allusion by any historian of the apostolic Church to such a dynastic order. This silence is inexplicable on the basis of this Romish tradition. The reason is obvious: Peter was not a prelatie bishop, and not being a prelatie bishop he could have no prelatie successor. Roman historians attempt to fill the hiatus, but do not agree among themselves. Fabrications are usually inconsistent. Certainty is impossible where facts do not exist.

But if the line, as respects the chronological order, were one and unbroken, yet there remain other facts that militate against the Romish theory. If we were constrained to accept the assumption that Peter as supreme bishop ordained a successor, yet the succession was evidently broken by the heresy of certain pontiffs, by fraudulent elections and by schisms which originated different pontifical lines, as when Rome was opposed by Avignon and Urban by Clement. There is no bridge to carry the Holy See across the centuries. Arianism setting aside fundamental truth, simony purchasing the papal tiara, mobocracy determining the succession and the dissoluteness of popes have for ever dismissed, in the judgment of the larger part of Christendom, the theory of an apostolic succession. Many are familiar with the statements of reliable history concerning the immorality of some of the popes. Gregory VII. was guilty of adultery, perjury and murder; Honorius was accused of grave offences by the Council of Constantinople; Eugenius was proved by the Council of Basle to be a simonist, a perjurer and a heretic; Alexander VI.

was admitted to be "one of the greatest and most horrible monsters in nature;" and Julius II. was a sodomite. And there were others like to them. We do not affirm that every pope was notoriously wicked, but we do insist that the immorality of men who claimed to be vicars of Christ, this immorality extending through successive papal dynasties, is quite sufficient to interrupt the flow of apostolic authority, and bring to a perpetual end the Church which conditioned its life on the continuity of a holy apostolic succession.

The entire priesthood of the Roman Church is unscriptural and its perpetuity is an impossibility. The Levitical priesthood was typical and occupied with symbolical sacrifices. It terminated with the propitiatory death of Christ. Our High Priest "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." He is gone into heaven "to appear in the presence of God for us." There is no longer any necessity for a priesthood, for altars and sacrifices. The whole sacerdotal system of Rome is anti-scriptural, dishonoring to Christ and a cruel deception. The ministry is commissioned to preach the evangel, not to wear priestly robes and offer sacrifices and bind the faith of men to a dead Judaism out of which living Christianity was born. Then it follows, since the ancient priesthood has ceased, that succession in the priesthood is an impossibility. The claim of Rome is an offence to ordinary intelligence. It is a profane substitution of a human invention for the divine ordination, and of hierarchical supremacy for the Headship of Jesus Christ.

The true successors of the apostles are those who possess the spirit of the apostles and do their works. Paul



wrote to Timothy, "The things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others." The gospel is the message. The faithful preacher of the word, called and qualified by the Holy Ghost, whether consecrated to his work by the hands of the Presbytery or of the bishop, is in the line of the apostolic succession. Every minister who maintains a faithful oversight of the flock of Christ is a bishop. He is designated by different names to indicate his several relations to the spiritual needs of the people, appointed for "the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." And the true visible Church, according to the Westminster Confession, consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children." In agreement with this definition is the statement of the Church of England that "the visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all these things that are requisite to the same." Accepting these definitions as being in harmony with the word of God, it displaces from the line of apostolic succession all unfaithful ministers, and sets aside the assumption of Romanists that they alone constitute the true Church of Christ.

If we were constrained to accept the papal dogma of apostolic succession, we would seek for it entirely outside the Romish communion. If it exists at all, it is to be found among the godly people who were never identified with Rome; who abode in the mountain-fastnesses

of Southern and Central Europe; who maintained the simple gospel, a scriptural polity and spiritual worship; who were the conservators of the truth during the Dark Ages, at whose altar-fires Reformers kindled the torches which dispelled the moral darkness and ushered in the glorious day whose sun shall never set. All honor to pious Waldenses among the Cottian Alps, who insisted at the beginning of the Reformation—and not without reason—that they were the true descendants of those who from father to son have preserved entire the apostolic faith in the valleys which they then occupied, and who appealed to earthly thrones for permission, as they expressed it, “to enjoy that free exercise of their religion which they had enjoyed from time out of mind, and before the dukes of Savoy became princes of Piedmont.” Rorenco, grand prior of St. Roch in Turin, who had examined ancient annals and traced subsequent history, published a volume in 1632 in which he gave it as his opinion, based on adequate testimony, that for at least six or seven centuries, and hence before the time of Hildebrand, the Waldenses had taught the same religion which they held in the time of Luther and Calvin. We have also the statement of Belvidere, the inquisitor, that these “heretics have been found in all periods of history in the valley of Angrona.” It is worthy of remark that the church polity of the Waldenses approximated very closely to that of modern Presbyterianism, their church courts corresponding to the Presbyterian church Session, Presbytery and Synod, the office of the Moderator of the latter being in no sense episcopal. The parity of the clergy remained intact throughout their entire history, and ordination to the ministry was accomplished



by the laying on of the hands of the Moderator and of his co-presbyters. Here is a unity in beliefs, order and polity which is without a parallel in modern history, in marked contrast to that which is claimed by the Roman Church, her rock quicksand and her traditions the whisperings of the empty wind. A continuity of organization originated several centuries after Christ, and the unification of Romanists in all parts of the world in one visible, external body, together with the subjection of the individual conscience to the judgment and will of the pope, are admitted. But this is not that unity of the Spirit, that uniformity in spiritual apprehension of truth and that loyalty to Jesus Christ, the true and only Head of the Church, which justify the claim of the papal Church. John Milton declared the assumption groundless, and insisted that the name "Roman Catholic" was as inappropriate and illogical as "Universal Particular." The eleventh article of the creed of Pius IV. should be for ever obsolete; "I acknowledge the Holy Catholic and apostolic Roman Church to be the mother and mistress of all churches." Equally absurd is any modified prelacy which unchurches the great company of believers in all the ages since Christ who had maintained the apostolic faith, lived godly and kept the ordinances of religion as administered by men who had not accepted ordination from prelatic bishops, yet had been made ministers of the evangel by the Holy Ghost.

The claim of the Romish Church to doctrinal unity is equally fallacious. It is an historic fact that within the fold of assumed ecclesiastical unity the Church has been greatly divided as to doctrinal beliefs. A few

instances may be cited. With respect to *transubstantiation* there has been diversity of opinion. By some conspicuous ecclesiastics it was classed among the non-essentials of the Romish system. Gregory the Great did not insist upon it. Pius IV. was quite willing to surrender it if by so doing he could secure the recognition of his supremacy on the British Isles. Those who held to the corporeal presence in the Lord's Supper supported their view by appeals to Ignatius and Justin Martyr; others were stumbled by the spiritual view of Tertullian and Augustine. The Fathers were not in accord. Ignatius's writings had been interlarded with papal fabrications and their testimony was uncertain. Infallible popes had not determined the important question. It was reserved for the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century to finally stop all discussion by reaffirming the dogma of transubstantiation and anathematizing all who denied it. From that time onward there has been little resistance to a doctrine which practically substitutes a shocking cannibalism for the sacrifice of the cross.

The doctrine of *purgatory* has long had a place in the Romish creed, yet some of Rome's leading theologians have pronounced "purgatorial punishment a matter of human opinion, which can be evinced neither from Scripture, Fathers, nor councils." Such names may be mentioned as Barnes, Courager, Alphonsus, Fisher and Polydorus. Some of the strongest advocates of an intermediate state of purification by fire have rested their argument on a passage in the Apocrypha, whilst others have thought to find its support in obscure texts in the canonical Scriptures; and even these differ in their interpretations until at last any scriptural ground for

their belief is reduced to such a minimum that a papal bull was necessary to establish an article of faith which should bind the consciences of men who have dismissed the right of private judgment.

There has been a like difference of opinion respecting the office of *extreme unction*. Some hold that the application of oil in the article of death, attended by the prayers of the administrator, secured only the remission of venial sins. Others have maintained as earnestly that the sacrament avails in case of mortal transgressions. Roman theologians have differed as to the authority on which the so-called sacrament rests. Some say it was instituted by our Lord, others refer it to apostolic custom, and another class accept it only as a vague intimation of the early Fathers, whilst still another class insist that the first four centuries fail to furnish any proof of this institution. It remained for the Council of Trent to exalt a disputed tradition to the dignity of an article of faith, adding the sanction of anathemas that enforced acquiescence.

In respect to *image-worship* there existed variant beliefs. Whether images were to be simply an aid to worship, suggestions of spiritual truth, a stairway by which souls went up to the holy hill, or whether they were themselves to be the object of worship, was not settled until the second Council of Nice made a deliverance which favored that gross idolatry which late councils modified, and then restored.

The *celibacy of the clergy* has been urged as a divine institution, but many accept it on human authority alone and consequently subject to modification or repeal. There is a uniformity in theory which has prevailed in

the later centuries, and the celibacy of the priesthood is urged as a means of securing greater loyalty to the Church and devotion to her sovereign Head.

Thus far we have had a view of the absence of unity of belief respecting what may be termed the externals of religion. This want of uniformity has also existed in connection with fundamental truth. Arianism has found a home in the Roman Church. The doctrine of justification has been variously interpreted. Sanctification has assumed protean shapes. The teachings of the Church respecting original sin, regeneration, the nature and office of faith and other doctrines have become as unreliable as the Epistles of St. Ignatius by reason of the radical changes which have occurred.

The unity of the Roman Church, then, is disproved. Real unity as respects the great, fundamental doctrines of revelation, with liberty as to things which are non-essential, is found in the Protestant Church only. From the Reformation until now no branch of the Reformed Church has called in question a single doctrine which is related to the salvation of men. The inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, the Godhead of Jesus Christ, the necessity and sufficiency of his death as an atonement for sin, justification by his righteousness appropriated by faith, the personality and work of the Holy Spirit, the necessity of personal holiness, the resurrection of the dead, a general judgment and future retribution,—are facts which are accepted and believed by Reformed Christians of every name. Underneath the superficial lines which divide the communion of the Protestant Church—many of which are national only, some of which have respect simply to forms of govern-

ment or modes of worship—lies the great substratum of saving truth, one and indivisible, on which all Protestants stand, declaring their loyalty to Christ and to the holy faith once delivered to the saints. In respect to unity in the essentials of religion Protestantism clearly holds the vantage-ground.

Even when error in the Romish Church crystalized in formulas supported by the most solemn sanctions, there existed either an external harmony only or the unity of death. Historically considered, apostolic succession, doctrinal unity and papal infallibility are myths, an affront to truth and an offence to human understanding.

— Roman Catholicism is a rebaptized paganism. In its best features it is a revival of philosophies which prevailed before Christ outside the Hebrew Church, and a perversion of the Scriptures which, to a large extent, practically denies what God affirms, and by a way which seems right to blinded souls conducts them to perdition.

— An intelligent author, conversant with the religions of China and India, has called attention to the similarity between Romanism and Buddhism: “Both have a supreme and infallible head; the celibacy of the priesthood; monasteries and nunneries; prayers in an unknown tongue; prayers to saints and intercessors; also prayers for the dead; repetition of prayers with the use of the rosary; works of merit and supererogation; self-imposed austerities and bodily inflictions; a formal daily service, consisting of chants, burning of candles, sprinkling of holy water, bowings, prostrations, marchings and counter-marchings. Both have also fast-days and

feast-days, religious processions, images and pictures of fabulous legends, and revere and worship relics, real and pretended." \*

The corruption of the priesthood and the moral degradation of the people in papal countries are well known. Where the papacy is least restrained by Protestantism its unhappy influence is most felt. In Spain, Mexico and Brazil the Roman priests are the most profligate of men. Many of them are gamblers, drunkards, adulterers and sodomites. They are permitted to celebrate the mass, receive confession and perform other functions of their office on the assumption that personal immorality does not vitiate the ordinances they administer. In Italy, since the unification of the kingdom under Victor Emmanuel, the priests are liable to the punishment inflicted on common criminals, and there is a measure of outward decency unknown under the old régime. And yet the people who worship at the altars of the great churches of Rome, Naples, Florence, Milan and Venice, and in the rude chapels on the Campagna and along the slopes of the Apennines and the Alps, have little or no confidence in the moral integrity of those who are believed to bear the vessels of the Lord. This corruption extends to nuns, monks and all the orders of the Romish hierarchy. The impurity of Cardinal Antonelli was not questioned in Rome, and yet he stood hard by the papal throne, and uttered many pious platitudes concerning the "Holy Gospel" and "my lord the pope." In the college of cardinals he was not an exception, nor is the succession broken.

In Roman Catholic countries we find a sad illustra-

\* Dr. Nevius in his *China and the Chinese*.



tion of the divinely-enunciated principle, "A corrupt tree brings forth corrupt fruit." Every form of vice exists and the worst crimes prevail. There is little morality found in Rome, the seat of the Holy See. What Machiavelli, a Romanist, said in his day, might be repeated now: "We Italians are indebted principally to the Church and the priests for having become impure and immoral." Murders are frequent in Rome, and the yellow Tiber with its lines of blood tells the story. Even Pius IX. admitted "the great increase of those who openly dare to blaspheme the name of God and are known to live in concubinage—nay, even in incest." Vice and crime are not excluded from any land, but are far more prevalent in those dominated by the Romish Church. Reliable statistics refer seventy per cent. of the crimes in Protestant countries to the Roman Catholic population. Romish priests solicit the chaplaincy of jails and penitentiaries and reformatories on the ground that the majority of the inmates are Roman Catholics. It may be claimed that the confessional restrains crime. The evidence does not appear. Its influence seems to be directly the opposite. The priest grants absolution for sin, and so encourages its repetition.

The superstitions of the Roman Catholic Church of the present are well known. Miracles are attributed to departed saints. Altars are festooned with representations of limbs restored, of incurable diseases cured and of souls released from purgatory through the interposition of these canonized worthies. The chain of St. Peter in the church of San Pietro de Vinculo in Rome is an object of superstitious worship, and physical con-



tact with it secures both physical and spiritual benefits. Like efficacy attaches to the wood of the true cross, to the nails which penetrated the hands and feet of our Lord and the thorns which pierced his brow. The number of these sacred relics is sufficient to supply the world. They may be found in nearly all American cathedrals, and obscure chapels are honored with the bones of saints long since departed. In Lower Canada reputed miracles are wrought through the agency of these remains, and the most aggravated diseases have been healed in churches along the St. Lawrence dedicated to some pious nun or exceptionally godly monk who long ago passed through purgatory on the way to heaven.

The opposition to the common-school system of the United States is logical, yet it is inconsistent. At one time it is objected that our schools are purely secular, and Rome would cultivate the moral nature of the young. Again complaint is made whenever the Bible is used, since the reading of it sunders the ties which bind Roman Catholic children to their mother-Church. A remarkable admission! Romanism seeks an appropriation of the public-school funds for the purposes of education in the interests of the Church, and resorts to every available artifice to attract the children of Protestant families to her schools; and through this agency has succeeded in perverting many to her communion. Cardinal Antonelli said, "It were better the children should grow up in ignorance than be educated in such a system of schools as prevails in New England." Pope Pius IX., in an encyclical letter issued December 8, 1864, insisted that the education of the

young should be under the direction and conduct of the Romish Church, exempt from the control of the state and independent of the opinion of the age, with power to exercise discipline, determine the course of study and select teachers in all public schools. The result would be instruction in Romanism, and ignorance respecting the general subjects taught under the existing system.

The illiteracy in Roman Catholic countries is admitted by the highest authorities in the Church. Where schools have existed they have given almost exclusive attention to the catechism and religious ceremonies of the Church, and imparted only a superficial knowledge of the rudiments of education. In Italy seventy-three per cent. of the people can neither read nor write; in Spain, seventy-five per cent.; in Mexico, ninety-three per cent.; and in Portugal the percentage is larger.

When New Granada adopted a constitution making provision for a system of popular education, Pope Pius IX. declared this action null and void, condemning the principle on which it was based. In Sardinia the celebrated Sicardi laws protected "the right of all classes to the benefit of the schools and universities, without regard to sect or party," and the pontiff pronounced anathemas upon the government and people who had the temerity to enact and uphold a law subversive of the interests of the Church.

Ignorance and poverty are associated. Mendicancy prevails in all Roman Catholic countries. It is comparatively unknown in Protestant lands, and in the latter extreme poverty is largely confined to adherents of the papal Church. The line is unmistakably clear which in this regard separates European countries which

are Roman Catholic from those which are Protestant. Compare Italy with Switzerland, Spain with Holland, France with England, and Southern Ireland with Northern Ireland, and the contrast is great. The relations of cause and effect are apparent.

The Romish Church of the present maintains its early animus, and holds with an unyielding tenacity every principle that has supported her government and precluded religious freedom. Ultramontaniam insists upon the supremacy of the pope with all the energy of the Dark Ages. The errors incorporated into the creeds of Romanism in the times of Gregory VII. and Pius IV. continue until the present, and the people are required to believe them.

Romanism retains its original position with regard to the right of private judgment. Protestantism holds that the word of God is the rule of faith. It adduces the evidence of the divine origin of the Scriptures, and submits this evidence to the scrutiny of private judgment. The Bible being accepted as the infallible word of God, Protestantism, comparing scripture with scripture, pursuing its investigations under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, formulates its doctrinal beliefs and ethical conclusions in an intelligent, logical system; then submits this result also to the examination of private judgment.

The first premise having been admitted—namely, that the Bible is a revelation from God—Protestantism insists that all its doctrinal statements shall be brought to the test of the Scriptures, and maintains that it is the office of private judgment to inquire whether the formulated creed is in harmony with the divine word. If it

is in accord with the Scriptures, it is to be believed ; if it is not, it is to be rejected.

Romanism forbids this exercise of judgment. Whatever the Church teaches is to be implicitly believed, though it be contrary to reason and the evidence of any one or all of the senses. Transubstantiation is maintained on this basis: on any other it would fall. A candidate for admission to holy orders is required to submit his judgment to the Church. The recusant is rejected. Instances might be cited of persons who were refused admission to the Romish priesthood because they would not accept statements which were contradicted by their natural senses, such as that red was blue, that three was two and a piece of marble was matured fruit. The test was employed to determine the question of subjection to the authority of the Church.

The Vatican hurls anathemas against all who dare to think and decide for themselves. It yokes the human judgment to the papal car, and converts man into a mere machine to be manipulated by that hierarchy which has vaulted into the throne of supreme intelligence. This claim of the Romish Church to supremacy over the intellectual powers of men as related to religious beliefs, suspending eternal salvation on subjection to her dogmatism, is one of the most blasphemous and dreadful assumptions of power ever made by fallen humanity. It never has been the office of the Church to create truth ; truth is the birth-chamber of the Church. The true Church teaches and conserves the truth. Her attitude toward the word of God is ever that of the Holy Spirit in his relations to the other persons of the Trinity and to ourselves in the economy of

redemption, of whom Christ said, "Whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he also speak." Melancthon well said, "Let us hear the Church teaching and admonishing, but let us not regulate our faith by the authority of the Church. The Church has no right to make articles of faith; she can only teach and admonish." The papacy has decided otherwise, and has never surrendered its position.

The Church of Rome resists all religious toleration in this age as it resisted it in the time of Luther. One of the leading organs of Romanism makes the statement that "the Catholic who says the Church is not intolerant belies the sacred spouse of Christ. The Christian who proposes to be tolerant himself is dishonest or ill-informed, or both." A *Synopsis of Moral Theology* prepared for Romish seminaries and students of theology repeats in the nineteenth century the judgment of the sixteenth, that "heretics are rightly punished with death," and reaches the conclusion by the old process of reasoning—viz. that if forgers of money are punishable, so are they who forge the faith, and only death is an adequate infliction for the latter.

The bishop of Minorca in 1876 issued a circular which he required all the clergy in his diocese to read from their pulpits on three consecutive Sundays, and commanded them to enforce its injunctions. In this remarkable missive he said: "We renew and reiterate our sentence of the highest order of excommunication against heretics of every sort, kind and description, against their pupils or adopted children, against their fathers, mothers, preceptors and all who sit at meat with them. We fully excommunicate all and every

person or persons who dare to let a house to a heretic or Protestant for school or services, and every one who gives money or makes a loan or leaves a legacy to such persons; we excommunicate every one who lives on terms of friendship with such heretics, and every one who dares to say or write one word in their defence." This circular, written and published in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, almost within sight of St. Peter's and the Vatican, at least tacitly approved by the pope, finds its echo in expressions of like intolerance in the New World, as when the *Shepherd of the Valley* said: "If the Catholics ever gain the ascendancy here, as they certainly will, religious freedom is at an end." And the *Western Watchman* in 1888 tells us what the papacy would do with Protestantism if it had the power: "We would impale it and hang it up for crows' nests. We would tear it with pinchers and fire it with hot irons. We would fill it with molten lead and sink it in hell-fire a hundred fathoms deep." Such intemperate expressions may be disapproved by many Romanists, yet they represent the prevailing spirit and intent of Roman Catholicism, and one of the most conservative journals in America has truthfully said: "Popery has never done aught but repeat itself in the world. It hobnobs with atheism and infidelity, and repeats and cheers their blasphemies because they are leveled at Protestantism."

Pope Leo XIII. in an encyclical letter published in 1885 exhorted "all Catholics who would devote careful attention to public manners to take a part in all municipal affairs and elections, and to further the principles of the Church in all public services, meetings and gath-



erings. All Catholics must make themselves felt as active elements in daily political life in the countries where they live. They must penetrate wherever possible into the administration of civil affairs, must constantly exert the utmost vigilance and energy to prevent the usage of liberty from going beyond the limits fixed by God's law. All Catholics should do all in their power to cause the constitutions of States and legislation to be moulded to the principles of the true Church. All Catholic writers and journalists should never lose, for an instant, from view the above principles."

There is herein a mixture of truth and error. Christians ought to make their influence felt at the sources of civil power and resist the enthronement of wickedness. But these efforts are misdirected and may result in civil and religious disaster when exerted in the interests of the Church which opposes the right of private judgment, freedom of conscience and liberty of worship, and holds that the pope and priests by divine right are entitled to control our temporal affairs and are themselves amenable only to ecclesiastical courts. Romanism to-day dominates the political life of the chief cities of America, and holds the balance of power in the republic of the West—the greatest religio-political organization in the world.

The present numerical strength and influence of Romanism in the countries where it has long existed may properly claim our attention. With the most complete organization known to history the Roman Catholic Church holds the religious supremacy in Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium and the Austrian empire, Lower Canada, Mexico, Central America, Bra-



zil and Africa, in the West Indies, Sardinia and Malta; in Polynesia, Ceylon and the Asiatic Archipelago; maintaining also a strong position in Germany, Scandinavia, Russia, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Greece, the Ottoman empire, Great Britain and the United States, and multiplying missions in India, China and Japan; entering nearly all the large cities of the world; seeking political ascendancy; establishing churches, schools and hospitals, monasteries and nunneries, in almost every land; advertising its presence and exaggerating its numerical strength by means of the peculiar dress of its priesthood and Sisters of Mercy found on every street, in all public conveyances, and made prominent on great national occasions; entering into the privacy of domestic life through a system of espionage unparalleled in the world, and moulding the beliefs of children through servants who touch life at its fountain-head—the largest religious body of the age, equaling the Protestants, Greek, Armenian and Abyssinian churches combined. Evidently, in view of the extension of Romanism, there is a necessity for continued watchfulness and unremitting effort, in dependence upon God, in the interests of evangelical religion and Bible morality as represented by the Reformed Church.

But there is another aspect of the subject which deserves mention. In Italy the unity of the kingdom has been established by the destruction of the temporal power of the pope. Some of the adherents of the papacy cheerfully accepted this result, largely influenced by political considerations, and in some instances by the belief that the spirituality of the Church would be ad-

vanced by this elimination of temporal prerogatives. But Pope Pius IX. very naturally condemned this action of the state, and anathematized Victor Emmanuel and all who had contributed to the suppression of his temporal dominion. Leo XIII., whose attitude had been accounted more liberal, persisted in asserting the right of the vicar of Christ to control civil affairs, and in an encyclical letter insists upon the exercise of this power as essential to the highest interests of the Church. In all this the hierarchy is consistent with its claim to supremacy in Church and State. It may be constrained to yield to the opposition of men and seclude itself in the pontifical palace, but its purpose is unchanged, and its hope of the ultimate recovery of temporal power relieves the gloom of temporary humiliation.

On the continent of Europe, Romanism is the dominating religion, yet it is in its decadence and as a government its power has materially declined. The "Old-Catholic" movement, which was adverse to the supremacy of the pope, has made but little advance, but it was, and continues to be, a protest against the dogma of papal infallibility and the centralization of absolute power in the Roman pontiff, that has brought at least a tremor to the papal throne. In Italy the resistance to churchly power is more decided than in any other European country, prompted as it is by the law of self-preservation. It is maintained by growing numbers in all classes, and reaches from the Apennines to the adjacent seas. In Austria the civil government has declared its independence of papal control, and has given wide scope to religious freedom and favors that popular education which has always been inimical to papal institutions.

In France the ancient domination of the pope is probably at an end. The people retain the religion of Rome, but the papal hierarchy has lost its power. The principles of religious toleration are so fully accepted that Protestant churches cluster around the Madeleine and Notre Dame in Paris, and have to some extent evangelized, at least outwardly, the priesthood of that potential city. Even in Spain there have been some pulsations of opposition to Rome. During the provisional regency of Espartero the pope's authority was treated with contempt. At a later period Catalonia especially endeavored to cast off the Roman yoke, and a long-established idolatry was thrust, at least temporarily, from its throne. And although Romanism has recovered much of its former power since the suppression of the republic, still the papal hierarchy has lost its ancient prestige, and it may not be many years until the voice of the evangel, now muffled, may be distinctly heard on the plateaus and in the valleys of that summer-land, even from the Escorial on the slope of the Guaderramas in the north to the Alhambra which overlooks the southern sea. In Belgium, where Roman Catholicism had long held undisputed sway, a system of public instruction has been established which has already relaxed the power of the Church, and may ultimately terminate papal rule in that prosperous kingdom. The great empire of Russia maintains its opposition to Rome, and Greek patriarchates distribute the ecclesiastical power which Romanism centralizes in the pope, whilst the Church is unified in the semi-sacerdotal headship of the czar, who crowns himself in the cathedral church of the Kremlin, and from the palace by the Neva looks

disdainfully out on papal Europe through the window opened by Peter the Great.

In England the papacy has made some advance during the latter part of the nineteenth century: Puseyism stands near the border-line between Protestantism and Romanism, with its face toward the latter, and has facilitated the passage from Anglican rationalism to the communion of Rome. Other influences have favored the papacy on the British Isles, and yet the numerical strength of the Roman Catholic Church is not increased.

The power of the papacy evidently waning in Europe, Romanism now disputes the supremacy of Protestantism in the empire of the West and persistently urges its way to seats of power. Religious toleration favors this aggressive movement. Then, too, the multitudes who come to us from Roman Catholic Europe bring their devotion to the Church with them, and their influence fills a widening sphere. A century ago the Roman Catholics of this country numbered only twenty-five thousand, or less than a hundredth part of our population, but they now constitute nearly the one-fifth, and are continually receiving large accessions from the Old World. They are rapidly multiplying their church-edifices, monasteries, and parochial and theological schools. They establish themselves in the great centres of population in the East and are the religious pioneers of the West. They subsidize municipal power and State legislation, and hope to make these the stepping-stones to national supremacy. The annexation of the Canadas and of Mexico, countries dominated by Romanism, might soon change the whole

complexion of our civil and religious institutions and imperil the nation. If Protestantism, in the exercise of a mistaken charity, should throw its moral support on the side of Romanism, ignoring the history of all preceding ages, and should recognize the Roman Church as a helpful member of the true body of Christ, to whom it is the duty of all Christians to bid a hearty God-speed, it would not be long until the principles of the Reformation would become obsolete and the shadow would go far back on the dial of the world's progress.

But our fears on these grounds are relieved by other well-established facts. Admitting the growth of the Roman Catholic Church; which is less than her statisticians claim, yet the growth of Protestantism is proportionately greater. Lutheranism is taking long strides; Presbyterianism is urging her way to the front; Methodism is rapidly growing in power; the several branches of the Baptist Church are greatly multiplying their numbers and strength. Not all Romanists who come hither from Europe remain in communion with their mother-Church. Released from the superstitions that had environed them in Roman Catholic countries, and brought in contact with our largely pre-dominating Protestantism, many of them renounce their corrupt religion and identify themselves with Protestant churches.

Ireland laments this defection from the faith. The Roman Catholic bishop of Kildare and Leighton says that of every ten Roman Catholics who leave their native land, seven are lost. They are lost to the Romish Church, some of them to find a purer religion, some

to substitute infidelity for beliefs that never gave them spiritual rest.

It has been stated by high papal authority, the remark covering the period the hierarchy has existed in the United States, that the Romish Church has lost in numbers far more than it has gained; and this is said in full view of the fact that Romanism has achieved decided results among the freedmen of the South and has welcomed perverts from high social circles in all our chief cities.

In the great monarchy of Brazil, Protestantism is advancing and Romanism is losing its power. There are pencilings of light along the religious horizon which betoken a better day. The steamers which ply on the Amazon carry the germs of gospel truth into the far interior; the secular press publishes the evangel along the western coast; commerce with Protestant nations aids the advance of pure religion.

In Mexico, Protestant missions are greatly relaxing the grasp of superstition. The gospel is preached in the old capital of the Aztecs, and Reformed churches are planted on paths once irrigated with human blood. The lights kindled in the darkness do not simply make the gloom more apparent, but gradually extend the influence of the truth and reveal the way to God.

Yet we recognize in the Church of Rome the possibilities of an extended longevity. Confucianism and Buddhism are old, and Mohammedanism is becoming hoary with age. Romanism possesses a like vitality. Through change, decay and dissolution it holds on its way. The Bourbons have lost their thrones, the Netherlands and France and Spain have witnessed revolu-



tions that destroyed palaces, overturned dynasties and ploughed empires as with earthquake. But the pope, though robbed of his temporal crown, still reigns the mightiest potentate known to these latter ages, and old superstitions, lingering in their seats, constrain multitudes of great and small to do reverence to the Holy Father, the vicar of Christ, the supreme head of the visible Church, whose blessing they crave, whose anathema they dread. The Vatican looks over on the Palatine Hill covered with the ruins of the Augustan age, claiming the centuries for its own and professing to descry its world-wide triumph from afar. Popery consecrates the statue of a pagan divinity, sets it in the aisle of St. Peter's church as an object of worship, and thinks to symbolize in that enduring bronze the perpetuity of its dominion.

— But the wrinkles of decay are on its brow and the tremor of age is in its steps. And even if it should live, shuffling its way down the centuries, until the loadstars of eternity shall rise above the hills, yet its overthrow, final and complete, is as certain as the word of Him who sits on the circle of the earth and inhabits eternity—a pledge of the destruction of this great Babylon in the brightness of our Lord's appearing.



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THE END.







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